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# PRO Wrestling

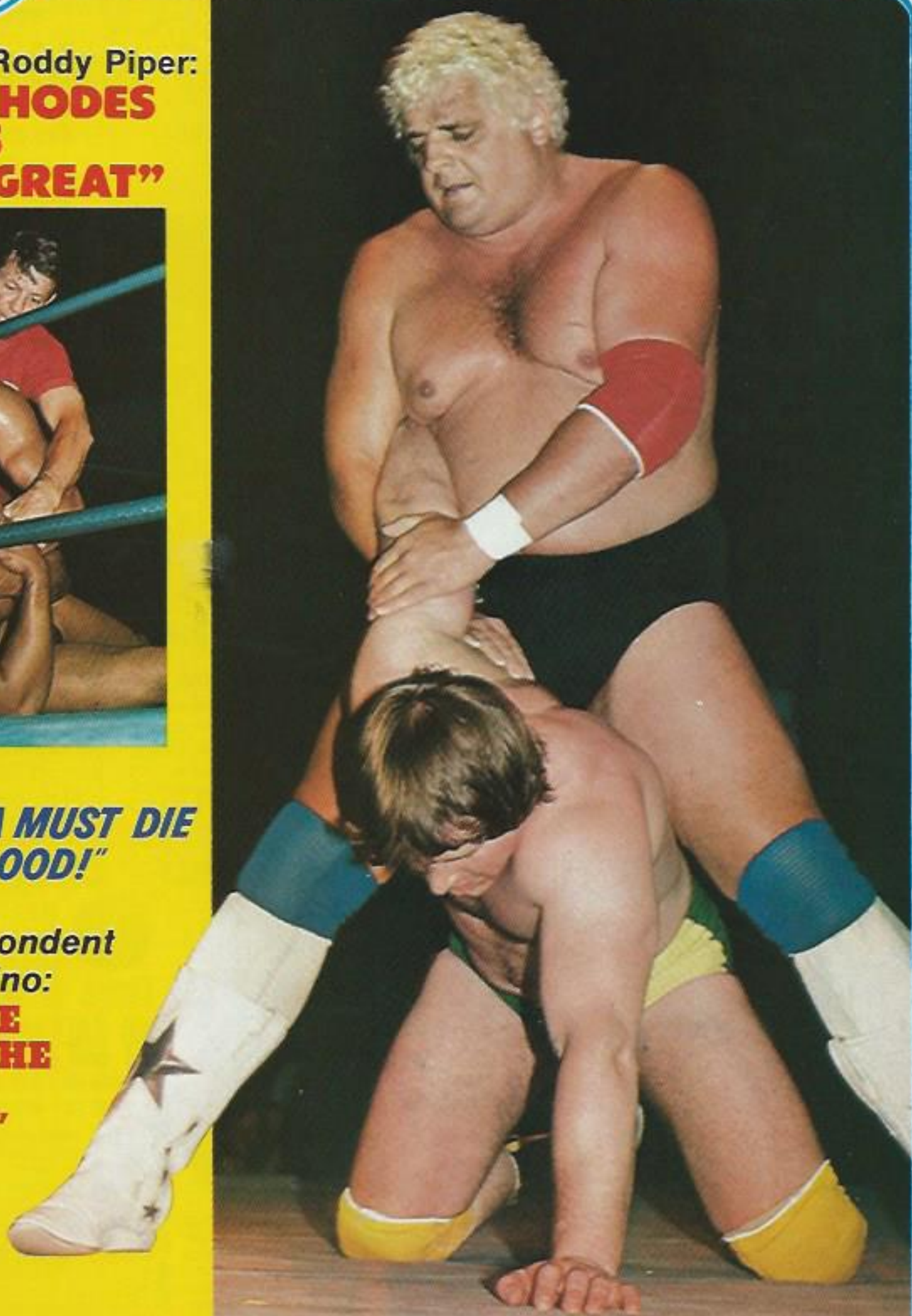
## ILLUSTRATED

U.S. Champion Roddy Piper:  
**"DUSTY RHODES  
HAS  
MADE ME GREAT"**



**PETER MAIVIA:**  
**"VICTOR RIVERA MUST DIE  
FOR TURNING GOOD!"**

Special Correspondent  
Bruno Sammartino:  
**"MY RINGSIDE  
REPORT ON THE  
BACKLUND-  
KOLOFF WAR"**





# KING'S COURT

By Peter King

**T**HERE ARE NOT many kind things one can say about The Grand Wizard. He is obnoxious, loud, vile, sarcastic, and a bad dresser. But the man knows wrestling. As a manager, he is as close to a perfect strategist as a man can come.

According to those who know him, the Wizard sleeps less than two hours a night. What can a man do in 22 waking hours? "I study and learn," said the Wizard.

Late at night, while the rest of humanity sleeps, the Grand Wizard sits in a darkened room, a projector humming quietly in the background. For six hours a day—every day—the Wizard watches movies and tapes of wrestling matches.

"I never wrestled professionally," he explains, "I was always too small and puny. Often, the bigger guys in my neighborhood, bullies who looked

like Backlund and Morales, would kick me and stomp me for no reason. I knew I would never be physically strong. So I developed my mind instead.

"As a manager, I don't have the advantage men like Lou Albano and Fred Blassie have. They are former wrestlers. But I am a student of the game. Yes, in fact I am a genius. I know every maneuver in the sport. I know every hold, every counter, every counter to every counter. This comes not from experience, but from knowledge."

Perhaps this explains the Wizard's strange contract with



*The Wizard, while not big enough to wrestle, has had a great effect on the sport over the past decade.*



*Don Muraco, viciously stomping away at Bugsy McGraw's knee, has been under contract to The Grand Wizard for five years.*

Magnificent Muraco. The two have had a signed agreement for more than five years. Every month, the Wizard would send a check—a big one—to Muraco, wherever the Hawaiian was. But Muraco did not take any matches in the WWF. Therefore, there was no money coming into the Wizard from Muraco. Since the Wizard has a great love for money, many people questioned his business sense. It seemed crazy to keep a man under contract, pay him a large salary, and not have him wrestle for you.

*(Continued on page 55)*



# RINGSIDE

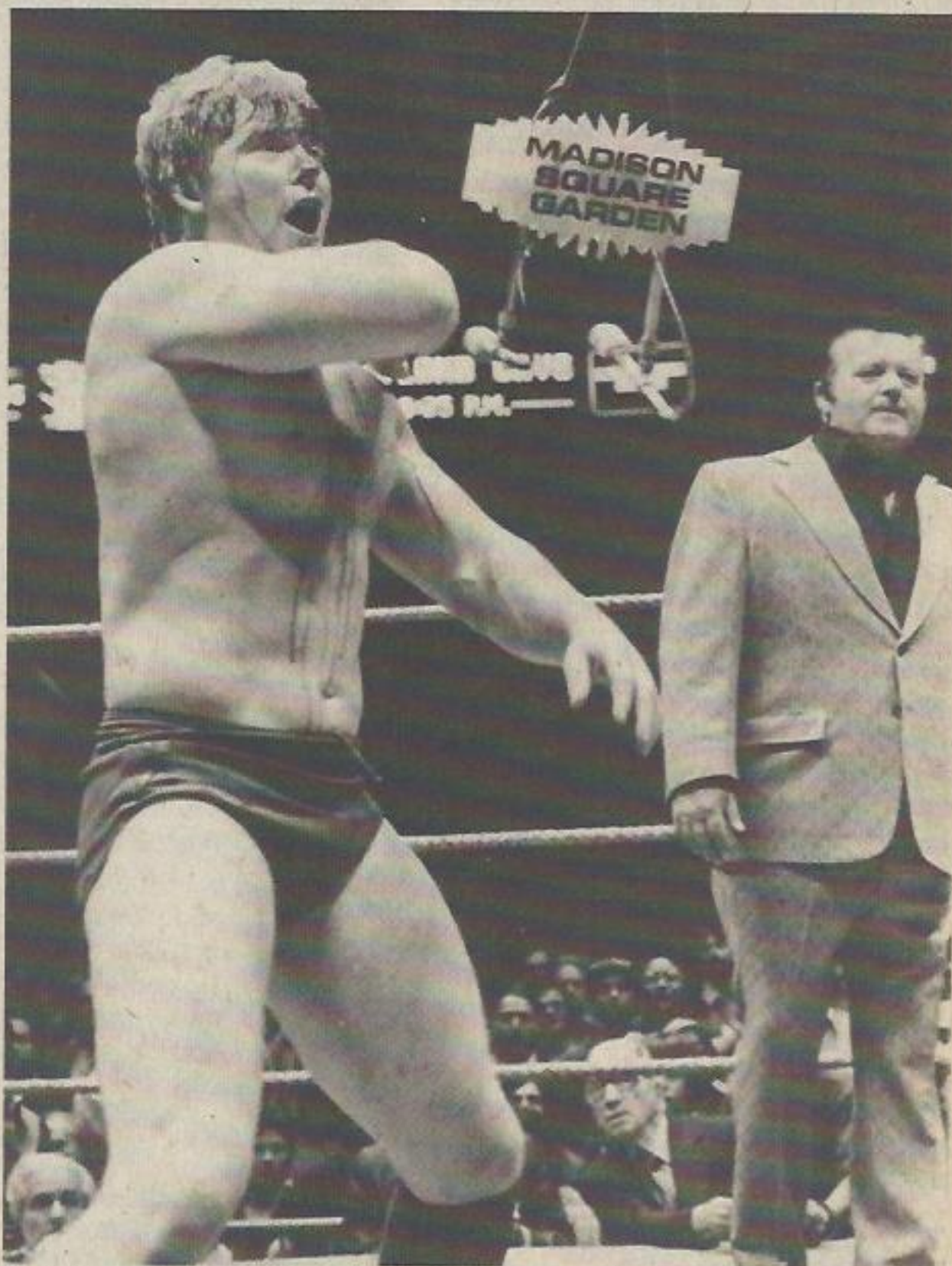
With Bill Apter

**T**HE NATIONAL WRESTLING Alliance has ordered that Ric Flair and Ivan Koloff, bitter enemies, not be allowed to appear in the same arena in the Mid-Atlantic region (unless they are booked to wrestle each other). NWA president Jim Crockett explains, "Whenever these guys are in the same arena one of them invariably interferes in the other's match. This is the only way we know to prevent such occurrences."

I have known WWF champion Bob Backlund for a long time. But I didn't realize what a hot temper Bob had until the incident in which he was viciously attacked, while in his street clothes, by King Kong Mosca. Mosca humiliated Bob by tying him upside down in the ring corner and then spitting in the young champion's face!

"Damnit Bill!" Backlund bellowed as I tried to interview him months after the incident. "That &c%\* Mosca will die for what he did to me in front of my fans." I'd hate to be in Mosca's shoes!

After a long absence, Jay Youngblood has returned to the Carolinas. Jay is teaming regularly with Wahoo McDaniel, who, incidentally, is Jay's idol. Their goal is to win the NWA tag team belts from the Anderson Brothers, Gene and Ole. Ole assures us, "Those renegades will never get the tag crown!" . . . Kelly Kiniski, the son of former NWA champion Gene Kiniski, is now wrestling in Florida . . . Curt Hennig, the son of Larry "The Axe" Hennig, has



*Dripping with blood and sweat, WWF champion Bob Backlund challenges King Kong Mosca to return to the ring after their initial Madison Square Garden encounter. Mosca humiliated Backlund on television soon after.*

become a semi-regular in WWF arenas.

What a wild cage match! The Anderson Brothers took on The Fabulous Freebirds in Atlanta

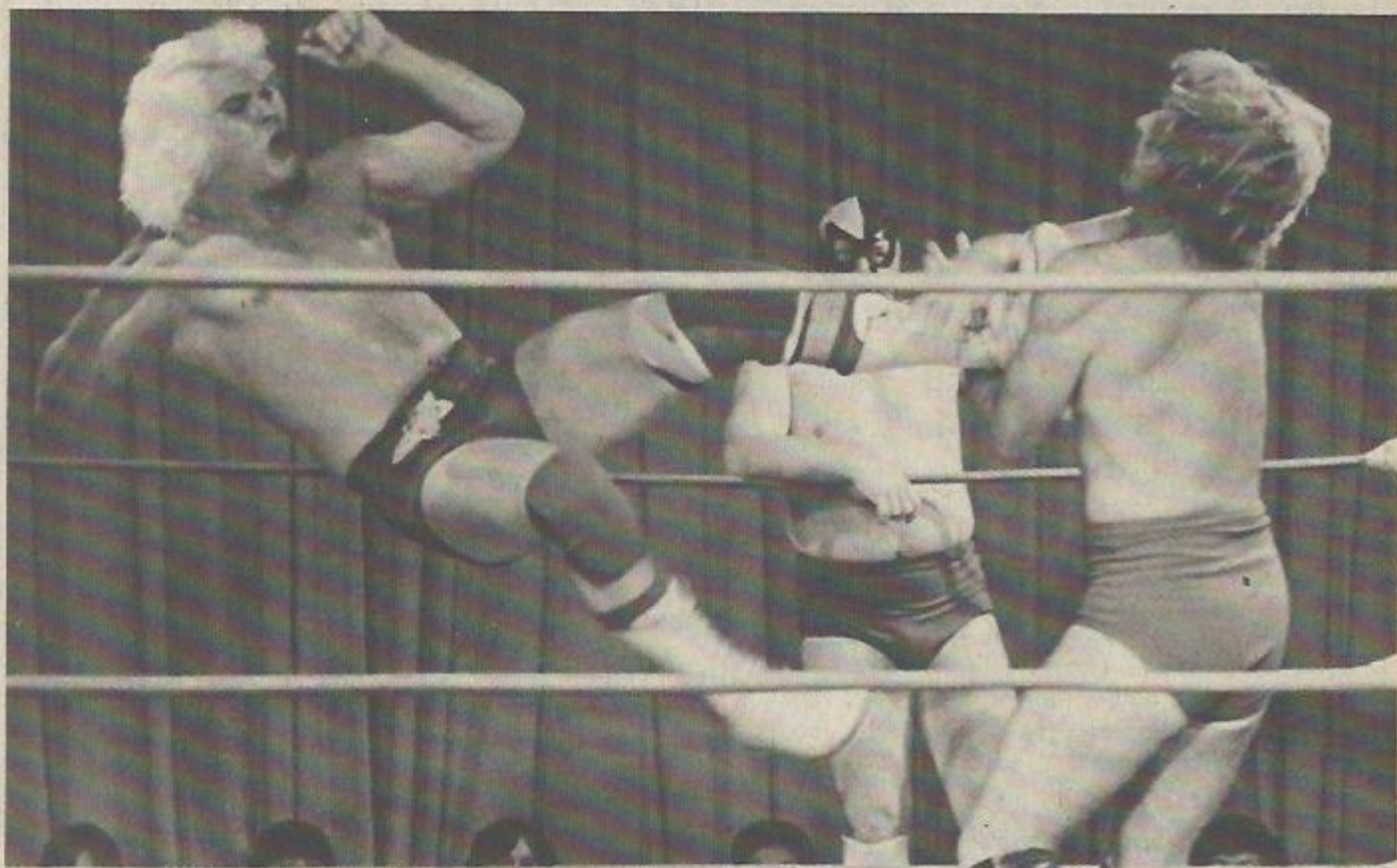
with both teams mauling each other. When the dust cleared, The Freebirds had taken a severe beating but managed to walk out

*(Continued on page 52)*



# DRESSING CONFIDENTIAL ROOM

By Stu Saks



*Every once in a while, Tommy Rich has to get away from the daily rigors of the professional wrestling world. Associate Editor Stu Saks spent some time with Tommy to see how he relaxes.*

**T**HE LIFE OF a professional wrestler is very demanding. Especially when the professional wrestler is very much in demand.

Tommy Rich, former NWA champion and current heavyweight king of Georgia, does not get very many days off. When he's not wrestling, he's either traveling to the location of his next match or he's in the

gym working on new strategies.

The days Tommy Rich has completely off are few and far between. But when they come, they are to be relished. "Mr. Wrestling II, when I was first starting out, pulled me aside and gave me a pretty stern lecture," Rich recalled. "He said, and I remember just about every word, he said 'Tommy, you can wrestle every day and

you can work out on your off-days, and that's all well and good. And that's showing a lot of dedication to your profession. But if you never put aside a day once in a while just to relax and get your mind off things a little, you are doing yourself a whole lotta damage.' I try to listen to II whenever I can."

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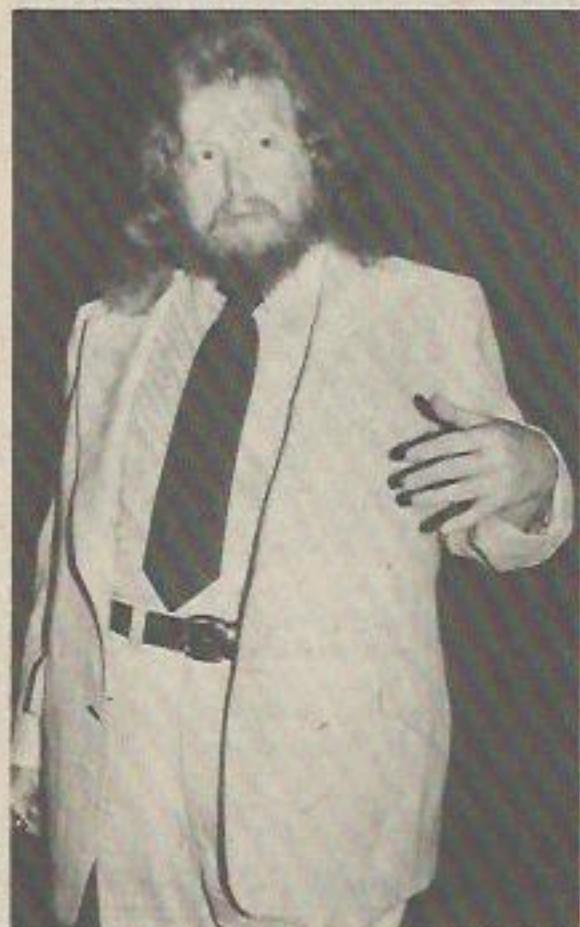


# THE MORGENSTEIN REPORT .....

By Gary Morgenstein

## BURN DOWN HIS MISSION

Sometimes I grow weary repeating myself. It seems I've dwelt long and needlessly on the insane antics of Sir Oliver Humperdink. I mistrusted his



SIR OLIVER HUMPERDINK

brief conversion to fairness and now I must ask all Florida wrestlers to refrain from any sense of fair play. Humperdink must be stopped in his fiendish goals. And what I say next I say after long and agonizing thought. I do believe that any measures undertaken by the Florida scientific wrestling world are sanctioned as long as they stop Humperdink. Sometimes one must go down to the level of his foe, even if it, for a while, obliterates the distinction between them. Humperdink is far too dangerous to be dealt with kindly. Whatever means are required to exterminate him and his entire evil house must be adopted. I regret the situation has reached such proportions. I regret having to say this. But I believe he is the single greatest threat to professional wrestling and his mission must be destroyed.

## CREDIT BACKLUND

This young man is a true champion. He is currently besieged by complete maniacs like George Steele, King Kong Mosca, and Sgt. Slaughter. Yet Backlund doesn't seek sympathy for his unholy assault upon his WWF championship. He accepts

their diabolical challenge like a real man. And a champion. I think it isn't too early to herald Backlund as one of the all-time great wrestling champions. Surely in the three years-plus he has held the title, he's distinguished himself with valor and courage, setting a fine example to all young and would-be athletes in all sports.

## RABIES TESTS?

I understand that all three federations (AWA, WWF, and NWA) have had difficulty coordinating policy, hence the problems in ever devising a tournament to determine one champion. But I think psychological tests should be given to wrestlers. Periodically, say, every three months and certainly every time a wrestler enters an area. And, regretfully, measures must be implemented to ensure that certain people do not bribe certain officials. It is well-known that Captain Lou Albano spread money around to make sure that measures were not undertaken to bar The Moondogs from wrestling in the WWF. Bulldog Brower paid people off to permit him to stay in wrestling. Certainly Abdullah the Butcher is a maniac whose wrestling license should be scrutinized very carefully. Surely all the federations share in collective abhorrence at the epidemic of maniacs running amuck, and this is merely one proposal to rectify a situation grown dangerous. Hopefully the public will apply pressure so that men like Steele or Crazy Luke Graham are either placed in sanitariums or barred from wrestling.

(Continued on page 54)



# A—ON— ASSIGNMENT

BY STEVEN FARHOOD

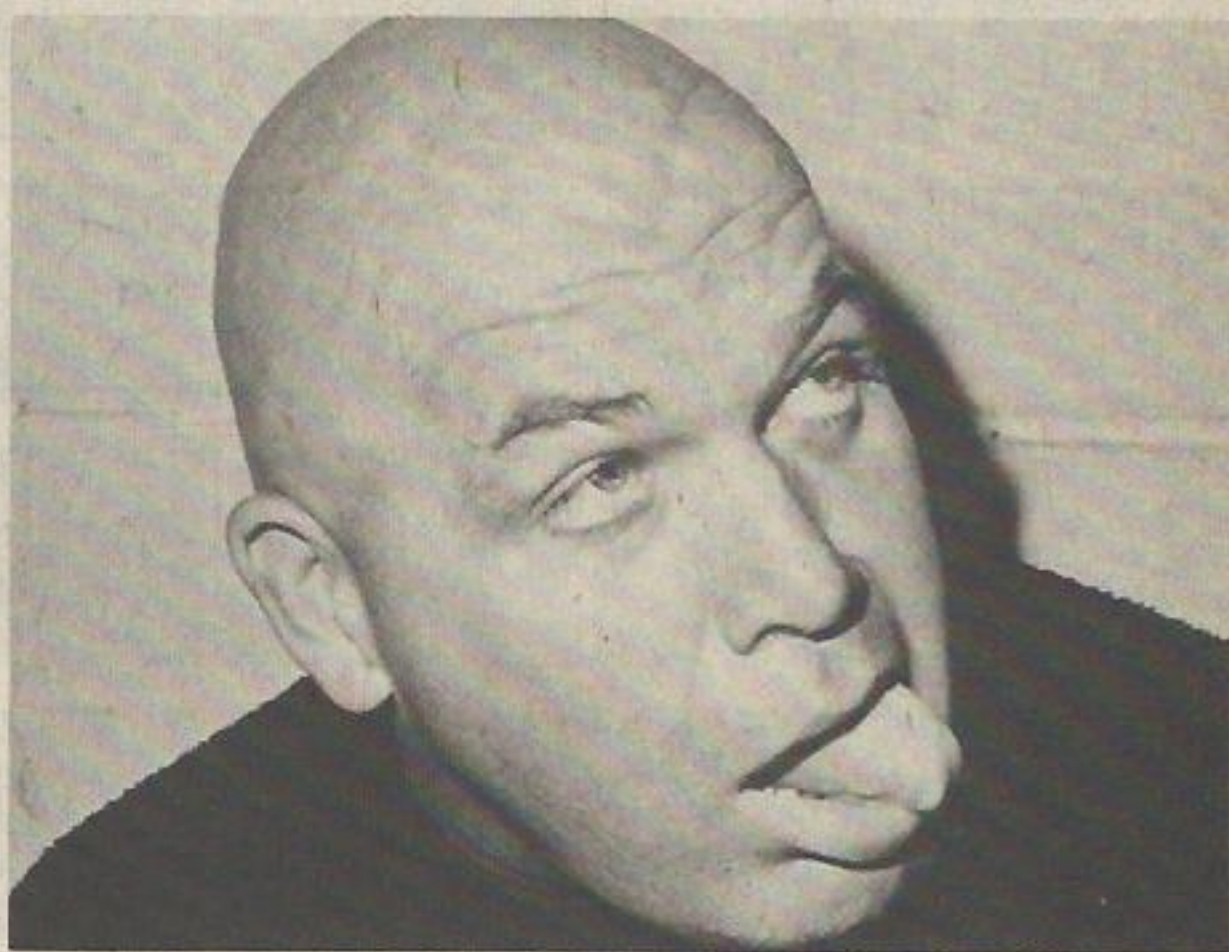
I NEVER KNEW eating breakfast could be such an experience.

It didn't take George "The Animal" Steele long to once again rise to the top of the WWF ratings. As the eccentric rulebreaker and I sat in a coffee shop in East Rutherford, New Jersey (why East Rutherford? For some strange reason Steele insisted on dining there even though his hotel was in New York City), Steele was preparing for his title shot against WWF champion Bob Backlund. The man's mood was, well, it was different.

The George Steele the wrestling fans know chews on turnbuckles, drools freely from his open mouth, and behaves in the squared circle much like a baboon whose newborn has



*George eats whenever the mood hits him. Even the stuffing in a turnbuckle is a feast for this crazed grappling star.*



*When one dines with George Steele, it quickly becomes evident why he is nicknamed "The Animal." Above, he is trying to decide whether or not he is enjoying the food. At least in this photo he isn't drooling.*

just been harmed. Believe it or not, outside of the ring, Steele *does not* modify his behavior. But on occasion, rare as it may be, he acts and speaks like a normal human being. Breakfast in East Rutherford was not one of these occasions.

I met George in the coffee shop. I was five minutes early, and I parked my car in the lot. But there were no other cars there! How did Steele arrive? Did he take the bus all the way from New York City, a 25-minute ride?

Steele was sitting in a booth by himself, dressed in a loose button-down shirt and a pair of baggy work pants. He acknowledged my presence by

jerking his head spasmodically, first forward, then side-to-side. I sat down and wondered why I didn't become the lawyer my mother wanted me to be.

"Beautiful day, isn't it George?" I began.

"Who?" he answered.

I immediately decided to pursue a different line of questioning. I looked directly into George's steel-blue eyes (did you ever notice that a good percentage of the human beings who exhibit deviant behavior have big, soft, watery eyes?) and asked him if he had ordered yet. Just as I did, a waitress brought over two menus. Steele snatched one

*(Continued on page 60)*



If you wish to contribute to Shocket's mailbag, send your letters to:

**TOP ROPE**  
Box 48  
Rockville Centre, N.Y.  
11571

# OFF THE TOP ROPE

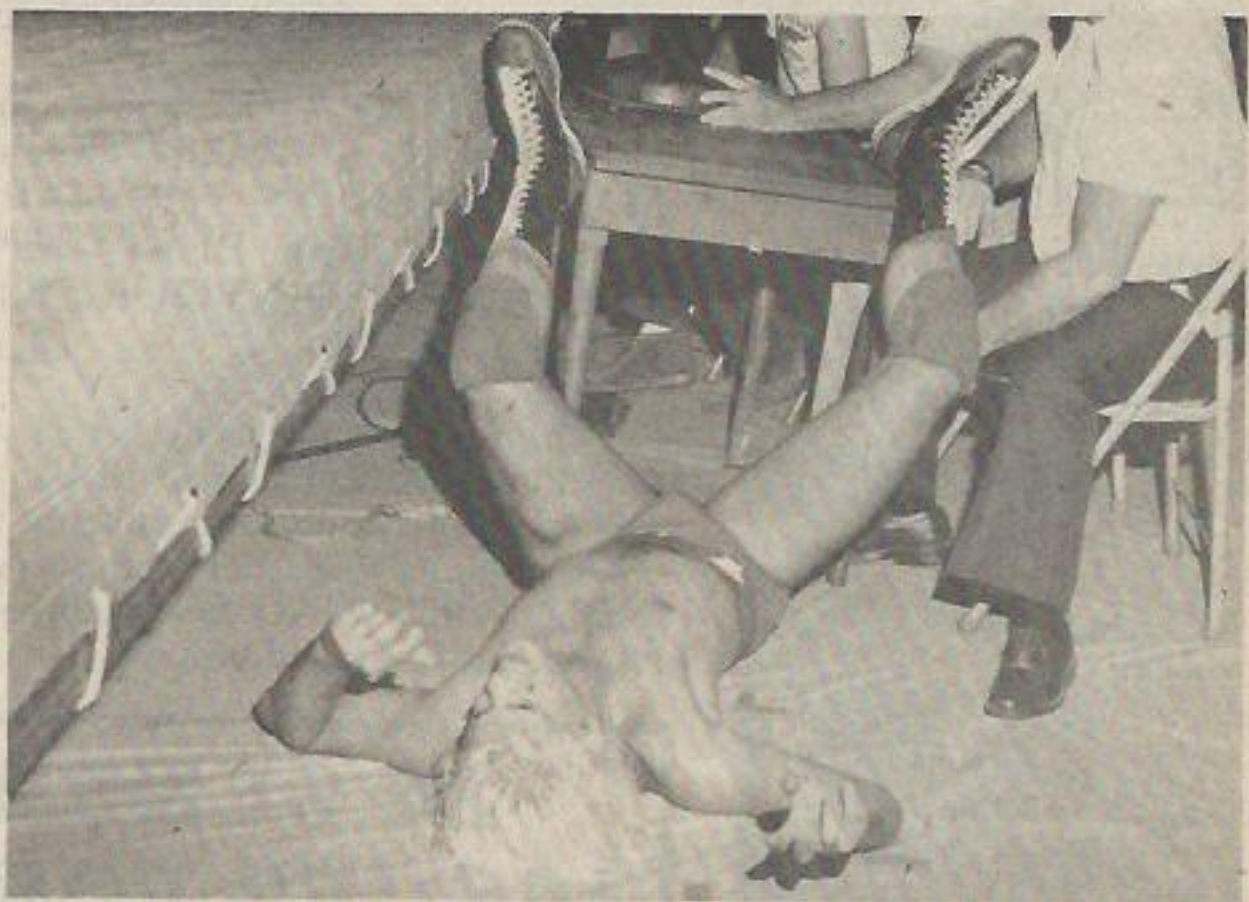
By Dan Shocket

**W**HO WOULD HAVE guessed it? It seems that Bob Backlund has fans! People actually scribbled moronic statements saying they think (?) Backlund deserves credit for his championship reign. To the many people who wrote in saying that, I'd like to say, please stop writing me. Your opinions are worthless, your prose is deathless, and your arguments are pointless. Bob Backlund is a bum, an insult to the WWF crown, and the most shameless crybaby in the history of wrestling. The only people who should mourn his defeat are the many referees made poorer when he's no longer around to bribe them. And now, on to this month's correspondence.

Dear Shocket:

Tommy Rich and Kerry Von Erich are the greatest wrestlers that ever lived. They have both beaten Harley Race for the belt. They have both beaten the bum, but he cheats to get his belt back.

Race doesn't deserve the belt because he's no champion.



*You call this a champion? He looks more like a dog rolling over for a biscuit. Tommy Rich was very lucky to beat Harley Race. But I'm sure you've heard that every dog has his day.*

Also, I would love to be the one to kick your butt.

STACY YOUNG  
Midwest City, OK

Dear Young:

Kerry Von Erich has never won the belt from anyone, much less Harley Race. Very few have ever won anything from Race and he makes it a habit to avenge those losses. For all your pompous mis-

conceptions, Race remains champion. Clearly, you spend too much time concerned with other people's rear ends.

Dear Mr. Shocket,

I think Ken Patera is a big crybaby.

When he won the Intercontinental title from Pat Patterson, he didn't allow them to review the match on



videotape. If he had, they'd have found that Patterson had his leg on the rope and Patera's pin was invalid.

Yet, when Patera lost the Intercontinental and Missouri titles, he complained it was uneven because the refs were Pat Patterson and Lou Thesz. I couldn't agree more. Patera knew these men were going to be referees, though, so why did he sign the contract?

AL SPINA  
West Chester, PA

Dear Mr. Spina,

Ken Patera, because he chooses to be his own man instead of a promoter's toady, never has much choice when it comes to who referees his match. In the two instances you cite, if Patera hadn't signed for those matches, the commissioners intended to strip him of the titles. Ken Patera isn't a crybaby. Often, someone appears to be a crybaby only because he insists on his legitimate rights.



Ken Patera showed a lot of heart by accepting obviously prejudicial referees. The question you fans should be asking is why he was forced into such a situation in the first place.

Dear Sir,

I want to tell you what a supposedly good wrestler did to his fans and how he let them down.

First: a supposedly bad car accident "forced" Barry Windham to relinquish his Florida heavyweight belt. In other words, he gave it up without even putting on a pair of tights.

Second: two weeks later, he was wrestling with his dad in Atlanta, Georgia.

We who always stood behind him and loved him, he literally knifed his fans in the back. I personally say *thumbs down* on Barry Windham.

JIM DAVIS  
Orlando, FL

Dear Sir,

As much as I hate to defend Barry Windham, or Blackjack Mulligan Jr., or whatever he's calling himself these days, I've been getting a lot of letters like yours. While I think there are many reasons to dislike Windham, he did not stab his



As much as I despise the wimp, it is true that Blackjack Mulligan Jr. was in serious condition for a few weeks.

fans in the back. I talked to the doctors involved. His injury was dangerous for only a short period of time, but it was dangerous. Attempting to wrestle would have left him permanently crippled. I always suspected wrestling fans were foolishly bloodthirsty, but I never suspected their bloodlust could be directed toward someone they supposedly "loved."

Dear Idiot Shocket,

If anyone is going to be called a moron, it's you.

Down here in North Carolina, if a farm animal does something wrong, we whip him until he learns. They should do the same to you. Believe me! I know! I've seen dogs like you get whipped.

HOLLY BARKER  
Eton College, NC

Dear Sadist Barker,

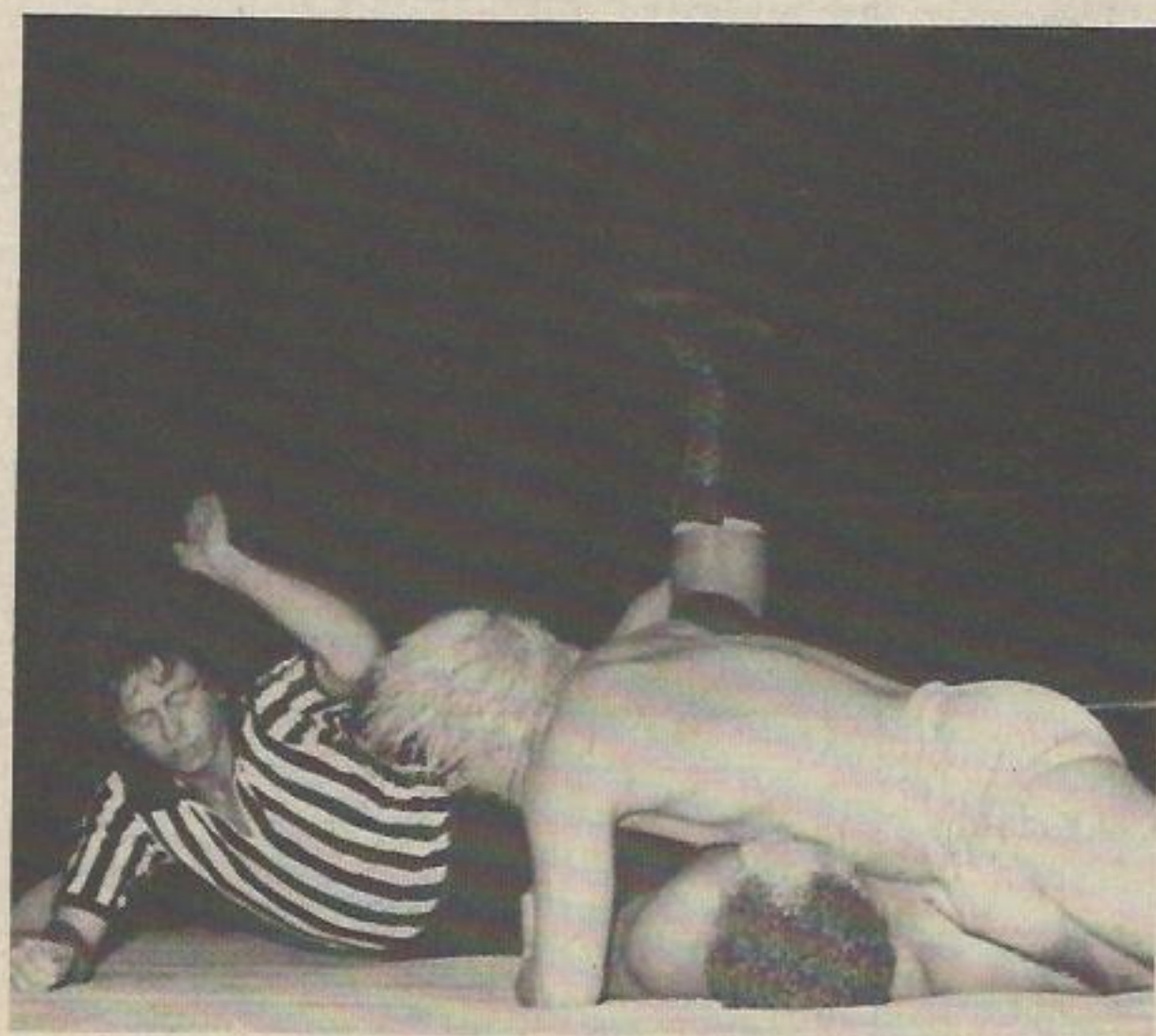
All the whipping in the world doesn't make wrong into right. All it makes are bullies, dictators, and people who get bitten when their backs are turned. □



Every month, three reporters from **PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED** will participate in an incisive press conference with a top wrestling star. The questions will be demanding. And the answers will reveal the innermost thoughts of the giants of the sport

# PRESS CONFERENCE

**TOMMY  
RICH**



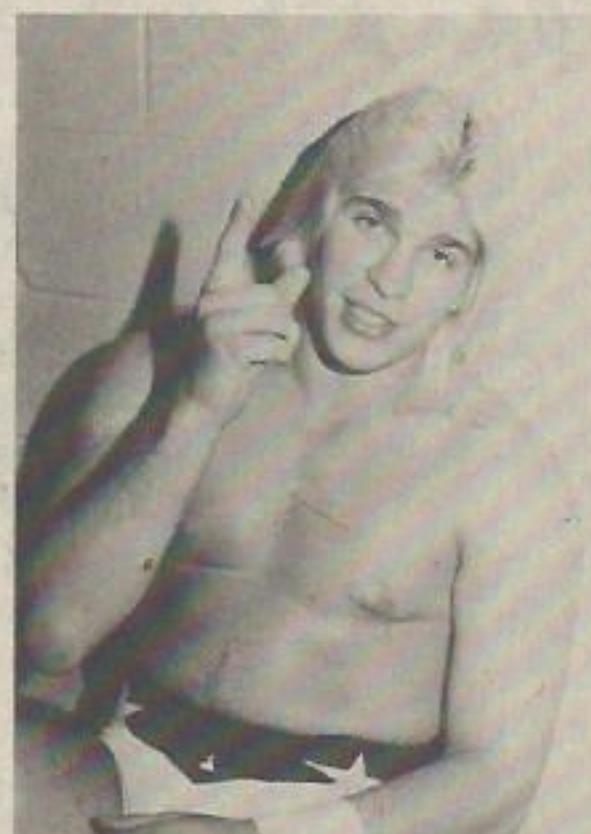
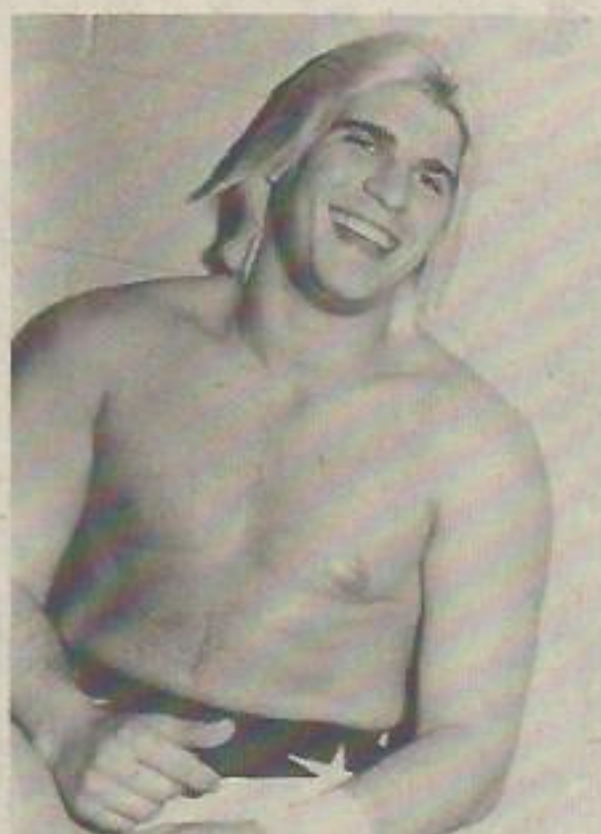
*(He held the NWA title for less than a week, but his triumph and reign rewarded hundreds of thousands of fans who never stopped believing. And for that reason alone, Tommy Rich stands as a shining example of courage and determination in a world often lacking in such critical ingredients. Discussing his career and attitudes on "Press Conference" are Editor-in-Chief Peter King, Managing Editor Bill Apter, and Associate Editor Steve Farhood.)*



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**“[Harley Race] knows the truth and the truth is that Tommy Rich beat him fair and square and won the NWA title. And nothing Harley Race or anyone else says will ever change that.”**

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PETER KING: Tommy, thanks for coming by and talking to us.

TOMMY RICH: My pleasure.

KING: There's no hard feelings between you and the media considering all the criticism you received after your conversion to rulebreaking, is there?

RICH: Certainly not, Peter, really. You know, I deserved what I got. You guys have a job to do, you do it real well, and if anybody wants to be in the spotlight, they damn well better learn how to deal with criticism.

STEVE FARHOOD: Do you find the spotlight difficult and demanding?

RICH: Oh, once you're a public figure, you come to accept some kinda interference on your personal freedom. I mean, I just

can't walk into any restaurant and eat without people asking for autographs. I love my fans.

BILL APTER: A while ago, you said you'd do anything for your fans. Do you still hold to that pledge?

RICH: Absolutely. I'm finished breaking promises. My word is good now. That's why I was so thrilled to win the NWA title for my fans.

KING: What was the first thought that went through your mind when you won the title?

RICH: I couldn't believe it. Yeah, that's right, it was so amazing to me, I, I was like a little kid again, the feeling of giddiness when you go under the Christmas tree and find a present you never thought you'd

ever get right there with your name on it. Yeah, it was simply the most amazing feeling in the world.

APTER: Now once Race got the belt back, he went around saying you were lucky. How do you feel about that?

RICH: Well, Race is entitled to his opinion, even if he's wrong and just saying things to make himself look better. He knows the truth and the truth is that Tommy Rich beat him fair and square and won the NWA title. And nothing Harley Race or anyone else says will ever change that, no way. He can run at the mouth all he wants, but he can't change that.

FARHOOD: What did you feel

*(Continued on page 58)*



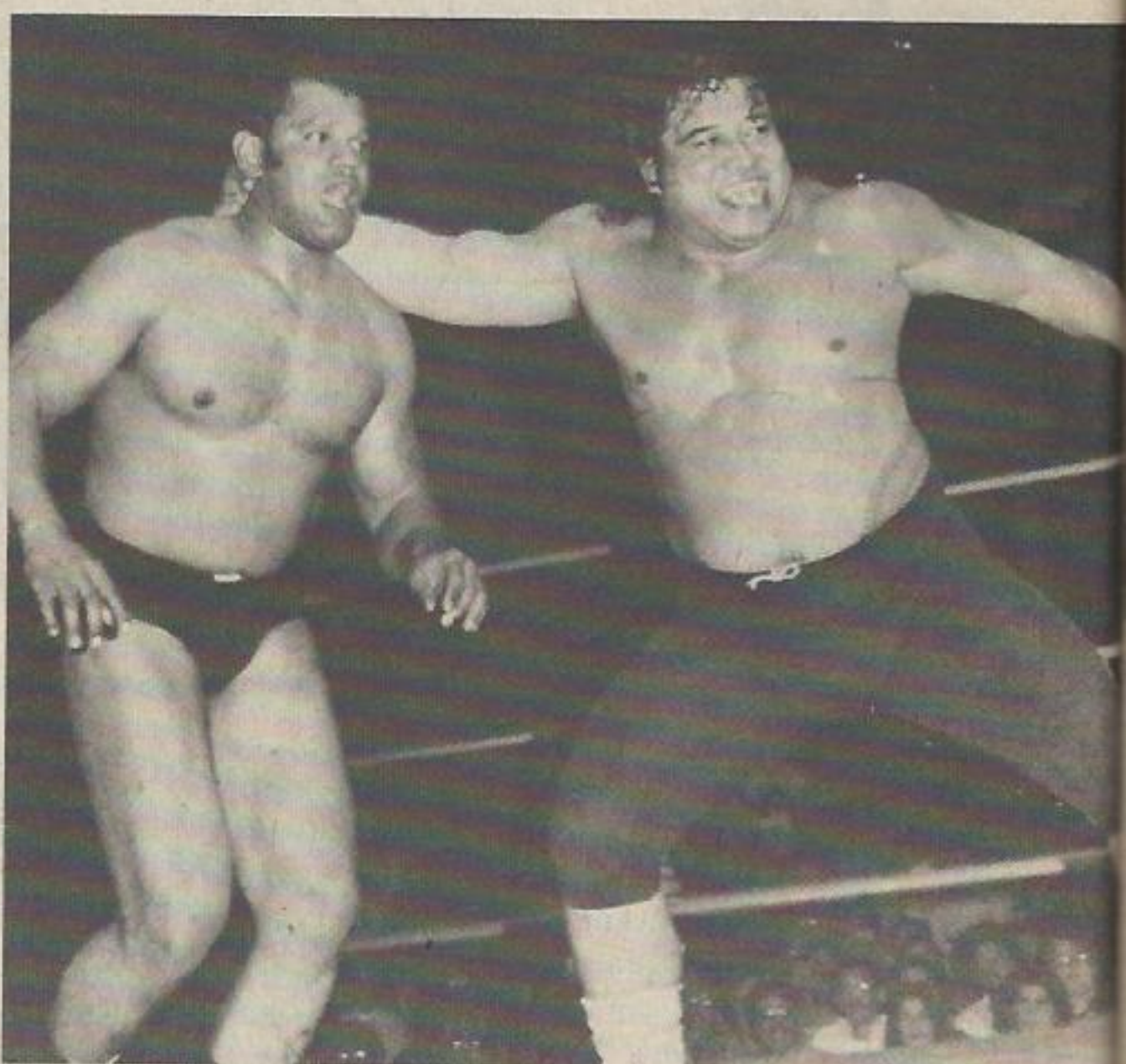
# **PETER MAIVIA:**

PHOTOS BY STU SAKS

## **"VICTOR RIVERA MUST DIE FOR TURNING GOOD!"**



High Chief Peter Maivia sits at ringside to scout Victor Rivera in his match with Rick Davidson (above). Maivia seems pleased as he grabs Victor by the neck and throws him out of the ring (right).



**S**OMETIMES WRESTLING FANS cannot understand the concepts of loyalty inherent in the rulebreaking world. If anything, those bonds of loyalty are stronger than those in the scientific wrestling community.

Since scientific wrestlers have more of a sense of security and trust, they try and understand when one strays from the fold. Even though they are often hurt, they only declare war and put a price on the traitor's head as a last resort.

But rulebreakers are different. Theirs is a world of savagery and violence. There is no minimizing kindness, no past memories of warmth to ease the furious emotions of betrayal when they perceive someone as turning their back on them.

Like Victor Rivera. He tried to explain to former friend Chief Peter Maivia why he returned to scientific wrestling.

"I call him on the phone," said Rivera. "I want to sit down and tell him why I did what I did. I do

not like to have enemies, you know? There is so much hate in this world that I do try and not make anymore hate, know what I mean?"

Rivera paused, the effort of recalling this vain attempt at reconciliation pulling down his handsome face in a saddened frown.

"I call Maivia at his home and try and tell him what happen. He hang up on me. I call back an hour or two later and he hang up on me again," said Rivera. "So I

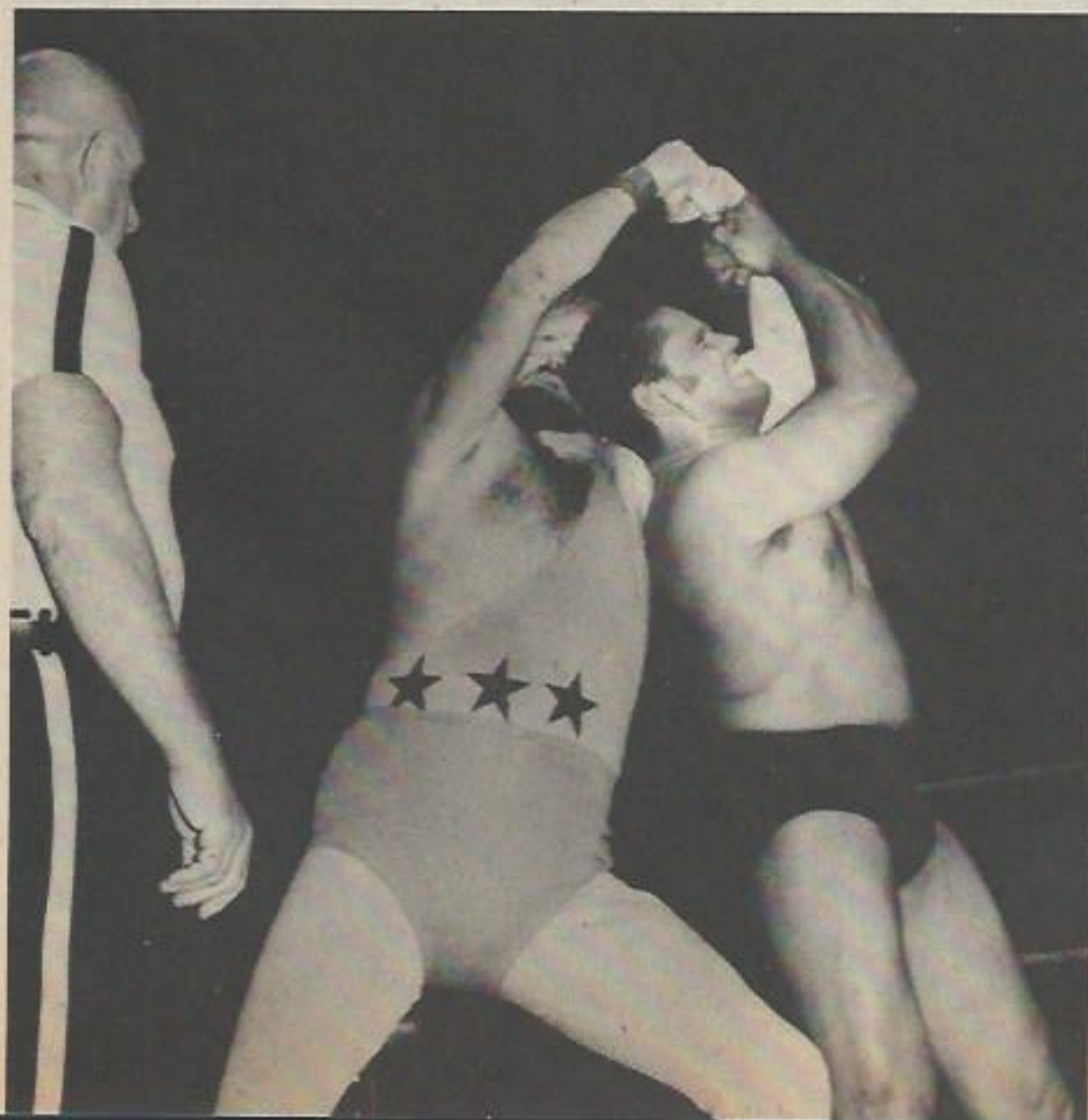


High Chief Peter Maivia does not easily forget a slight, even when that slight isn't directed at him personally. Once Victor Rivera turned to scientific wrestling, Maivia swore that that decision would be Rivera's death sentence. And Maivia intends to carry out the execution

II



Referee Johnny "Red Shoes" Dugan asks Rivera if he would like to submit to Maivia's nervehold (above). Maivia is incensed over Rivera's switch back to scientific wrestling. Victor gains the upper hand in a test of strength with Davidson, a noted California rulebreaker (below).



try and give him a few days, know what I mean?

"Again I call and leave a message on his answering machine. He never call me back. So I call again and again. I was determined to talk this out with him and so we do not have a terrible feud and hurt each other needlessly.

"I go to his house but he doesn't answer the door. He is at the top of the house, near his window, and I see him there. I step back a little bit and call up to him. He throws down a bucket of water on my head.

"But I know that he is angry and I try not to get angry. So I decide to write him a letter. I write the letter and get one back. Here, see?" Rivera brandished a letter. "I read to you. All he write back is that I gonna die for what I do. This make me very unhappy and so I decide I give it one last try.

"I know Peter go to his favorite



restaurant every Wednesday. It is called Pidgy's. It is a Samoan restaurant and I know Maivia love the food there. It is the best Samoan food outside of Samoa. So I walk in and see him sitting at a table in the back. I go up to his table and try to talk to him. He take the hot soup and throw it in my lap. I don't take this from any man, but I am too much a gentleman to start a fight there. I walk out. But he know my patience is over. If he want a fight, then he get a fight."

At the mere mention of Rivera, Maivia's mouth droops and incensed saliva dribbles down his chin.

"Victor Rivera must die for turning good," said Maivia, adjusting his native garb. "He betrays our rules. He turns his back on all that we hold dear. He stabs us in the back because he is not man enough to fight.

"We all know the truth about why he turned back to scientific wrestling. It is not what he says," continued Maivia. "It is not that he feels bad or was crazy or anything like that, with his mother. It is he knows he is losing his talent. If you are losing talent, if you can no longer wrestle, then you should go out like a man and retire or die.

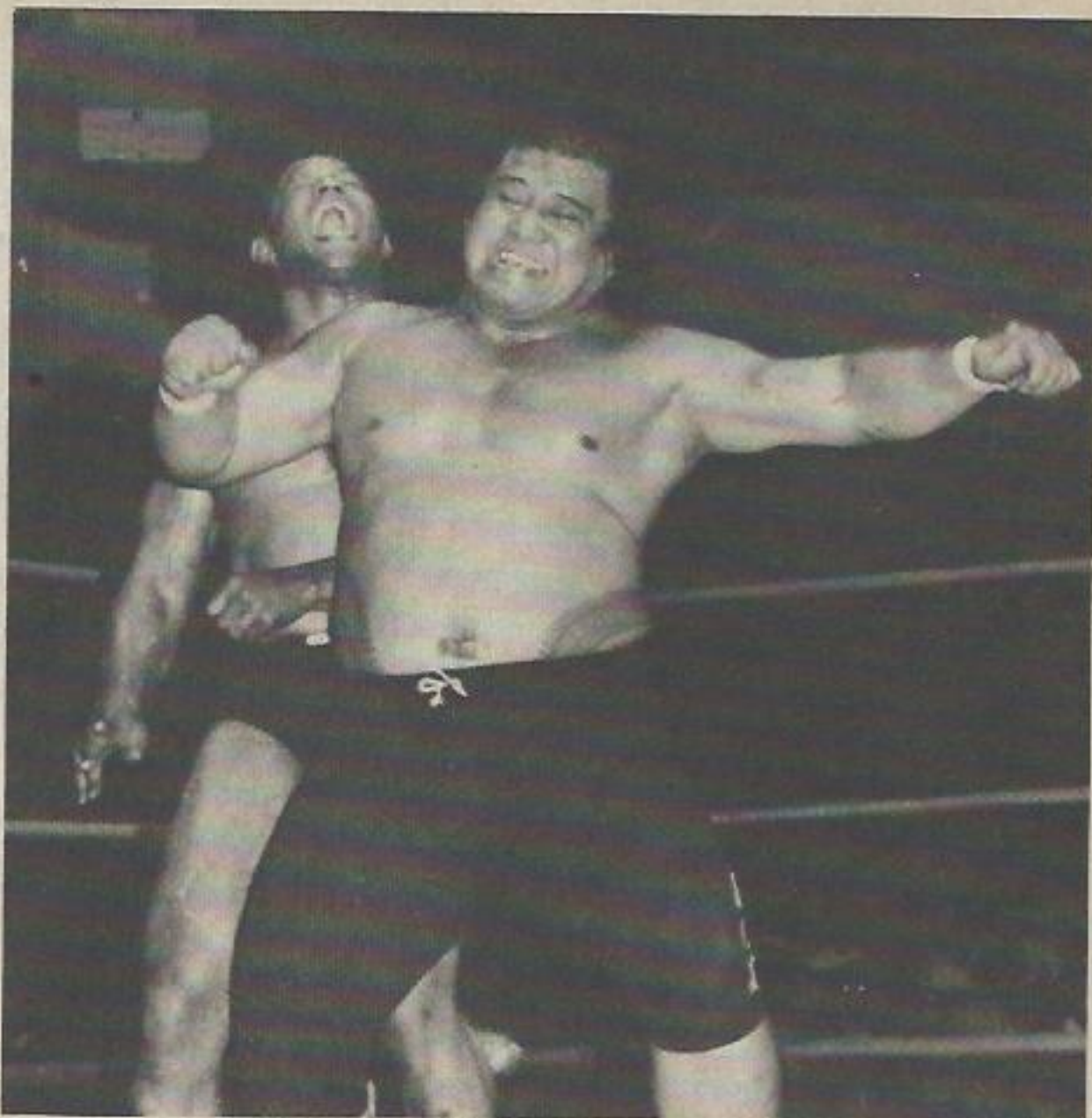
"Since Rivera doesn't have the guts to be a man and leave like a man, I must do it for him. I will follow him up and down California. I will not rest until he is made an example of. I want the world to know that there are rules to live by.

"And there is no room for cowards in wrestling. If Rivera lives, he will be rewarded for being a coward. Others will think they can get away with being a coward and traitor. He must hang off a palm tree and swing in the breeze so all the world knows what happens to cowards."

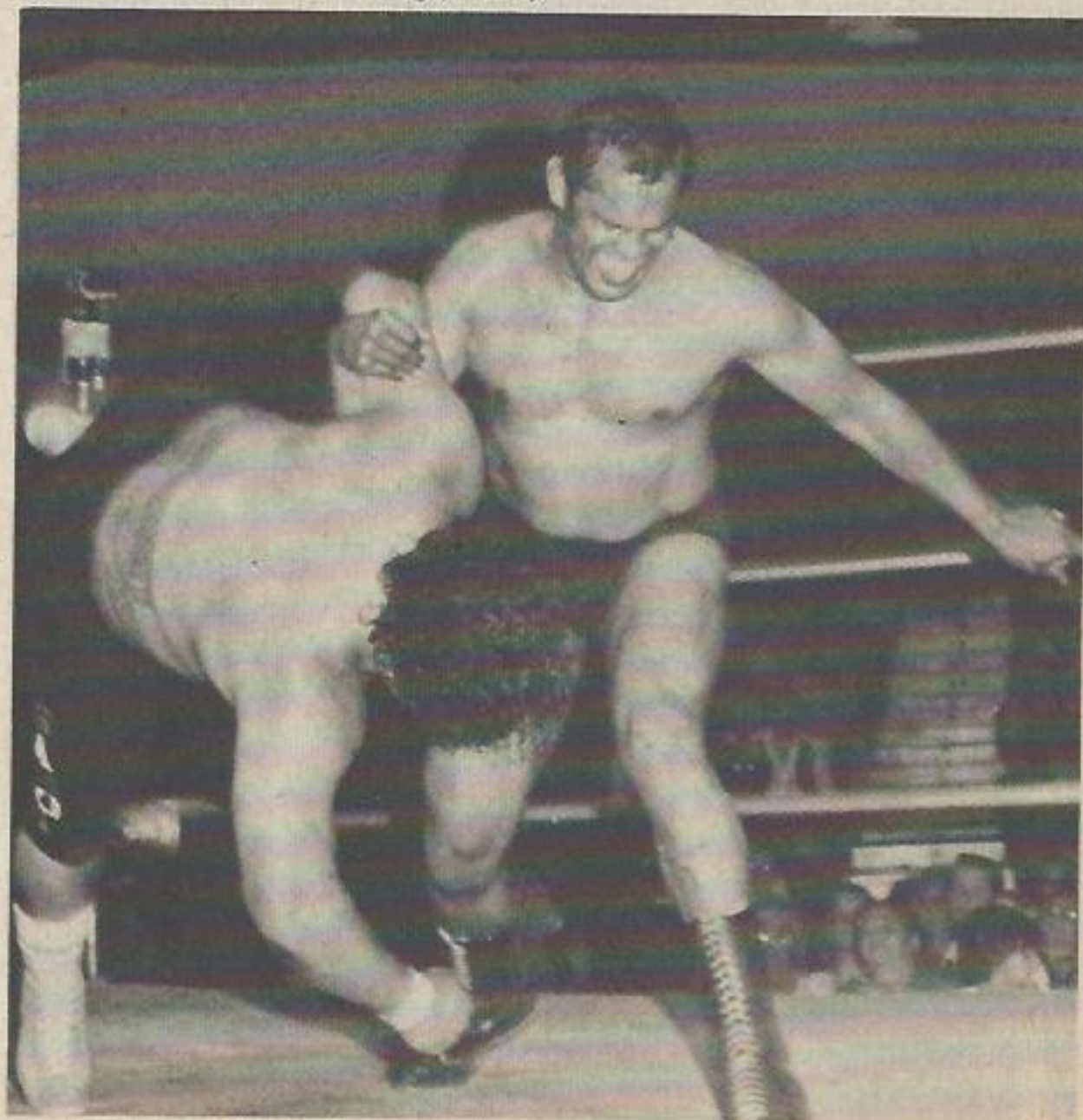
Rivera's response?

"I am ready for him."

□



*The Rivera-Maivia battle was more than a mere wrestling match; it was a war of lifestyles. Rivera runs right into a Maivia elbowsmash (above). Victor flings the Samoan chief across the ring (below).*





# WHAT THEY ARE SAYING

Every month, our reporters will compile wrestlers' most revealing quotes. Often catching the grapplers with their guards down, our reporters will work endlessly in obtaining interesting quotes on a variety of subjects

## BOB BACKLUND

"Looking back on it, I really wasn't ready to become champion when I did. I wasn't mean enough or hungry enough. It's strange that I want the title more each day that I have it. When I first became champion, the title was some great prize that I was just happy to have won. Today, the title is a part of me."



## VICTOR RIVERA

"I know there are some people laughing at me. They say I became a scientific wrestler because my mother demanded it. That's true, she did. I did change for her sake. For the past several months, I hadn't been happy. Now I'm happy. That's because I listened to my mother."



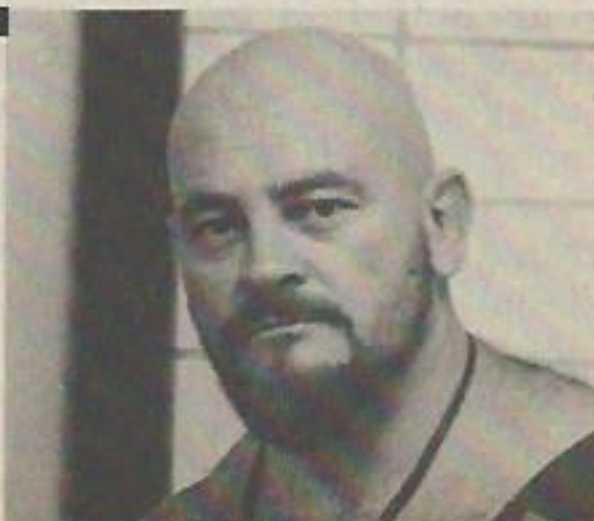
## SIR OLIVER HUMPERDINK

"I've never met a wrestling commissioner that wasn't on the take. They're all bribed by so-called scientific wrestlers. Dusty Rhodes is a poor man because he spends all his money on bribes. How do you think he gets all those title shots? He certainly never earned that many. I used to get angry about crooked officials, but I don't anymore. Hell, if I wrestled as badly as Rhodes, I'd be bribing people, too."



## IVAN KOLOFF

"I've won all the honors any man can hope to win. I like titles, but that isn't what keeps me going. I stay in wrestling because I enjoy making my opponents suffer. To feel the strength ooze from their bodies, to feel them go from proud to pitiful. If I ever stop loving that, I'll stop wrestling. Until then, many wrestlers must prepare to suffer."



*(Continued on page 51)*



*Special  
Correspondent*

**Bruno Sammartino:**

# "MY RINGSIDE REPORT ON THE BACKLUND- KOLOFF WAR"

**A**TANTA, GA—I was very happy when the editors of *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* asked me to cover this feud down here in Atlanta. I like to think I could add my expertise and analysis so the fans can understand exactly what is going on between WWF champion Bob Backlund and Ivan Koloff, the Mid-Atlantic heavyweight champion.

I would like to give a little behind-the-scenes understanding of the men involved.

First of all, I want to talk about WWF champion Bob Backlund. I've known Bob since he was first coming up in the professional ranks. I want to tell the fans that Backlund is a man of high principles. There are many talented wrestlers in the sport, but I find that a lot of them abuse their skills. Many of them use their talents for evil purposes. Not Backlund.

I have watched Bob over the three years or so he has been champion. I have

BY BRUNO SAMMARTINO



watched him mature as an individual and as a man. I have seen his skills sharpen and his maneuvers improve, but I find most important is the way Bob sticks to his principles. That is what I thought about as I watched this battle.

Now I want to tell you about Ivan Koloff. He is a former WWF champion. I have tangled with him on many occasions and I must say he is one rough customer. But the thing that bothers me about Koloff is his cruelty. He will never

stop even when his opponent is already beaten. I think that Ivan Koloff is the cruelest man in wrestling today. I do not think he has one ounce of kindness in his body. All he seems to care about in the ring is hurting his foe and I cannot respect that.

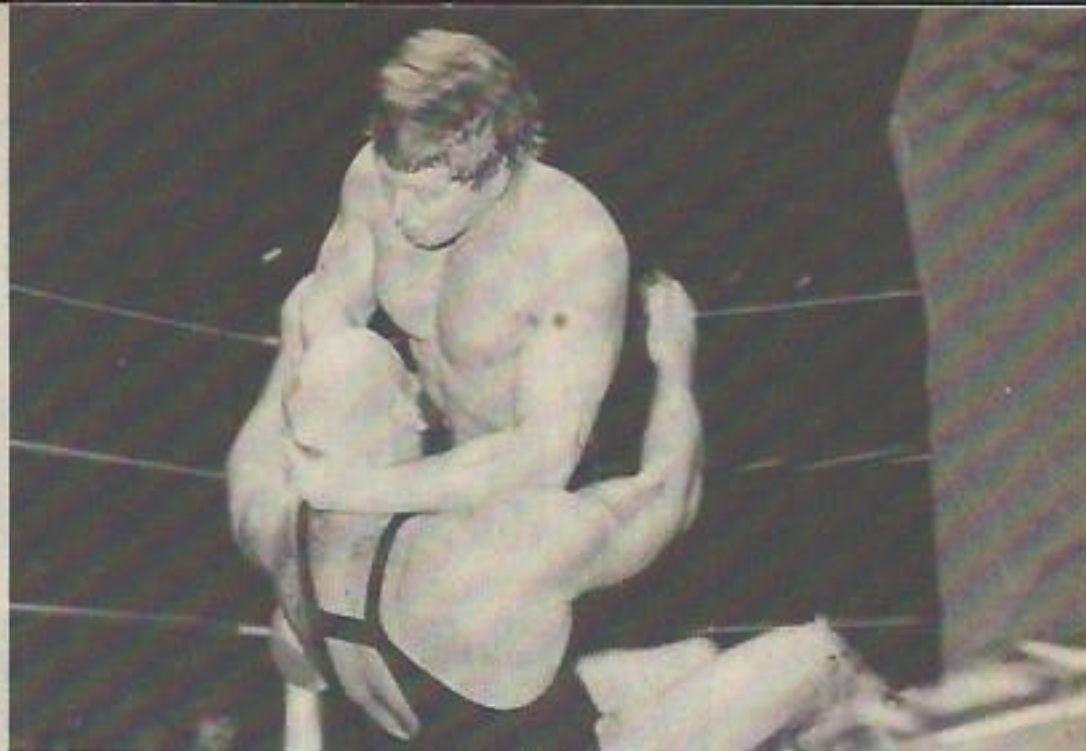
Now that I have set the stage for this battle, I can describe what has happened down here. Koloff has made some cracks about Backlund's courage and the champion responded, as all champions must, by accepting the challenge here in the Omni.

The crowd was filled to the brim in this lovely arena. You could cut the tension with a butter knife and spread it over garlic bread, that is how excited this crowd was for the match to begin.

Koloff glared at Backlund in the beginning of the match, trying to psyche the champion out. Koloff uses this glare often as a

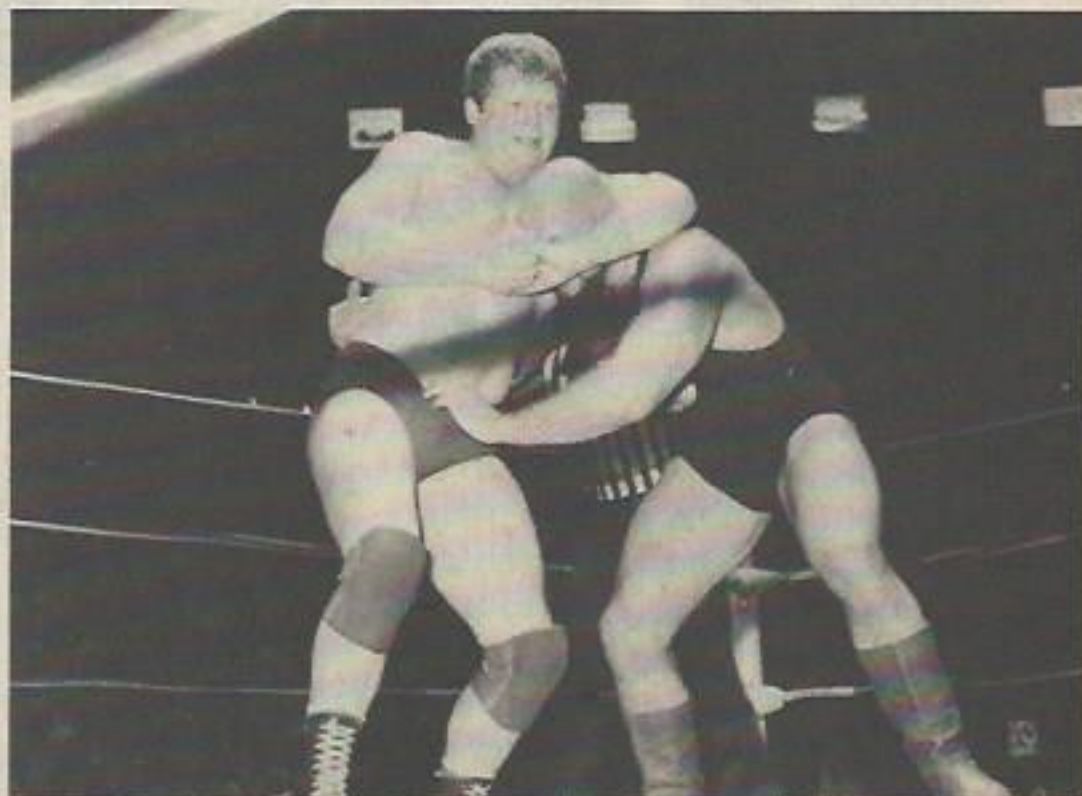
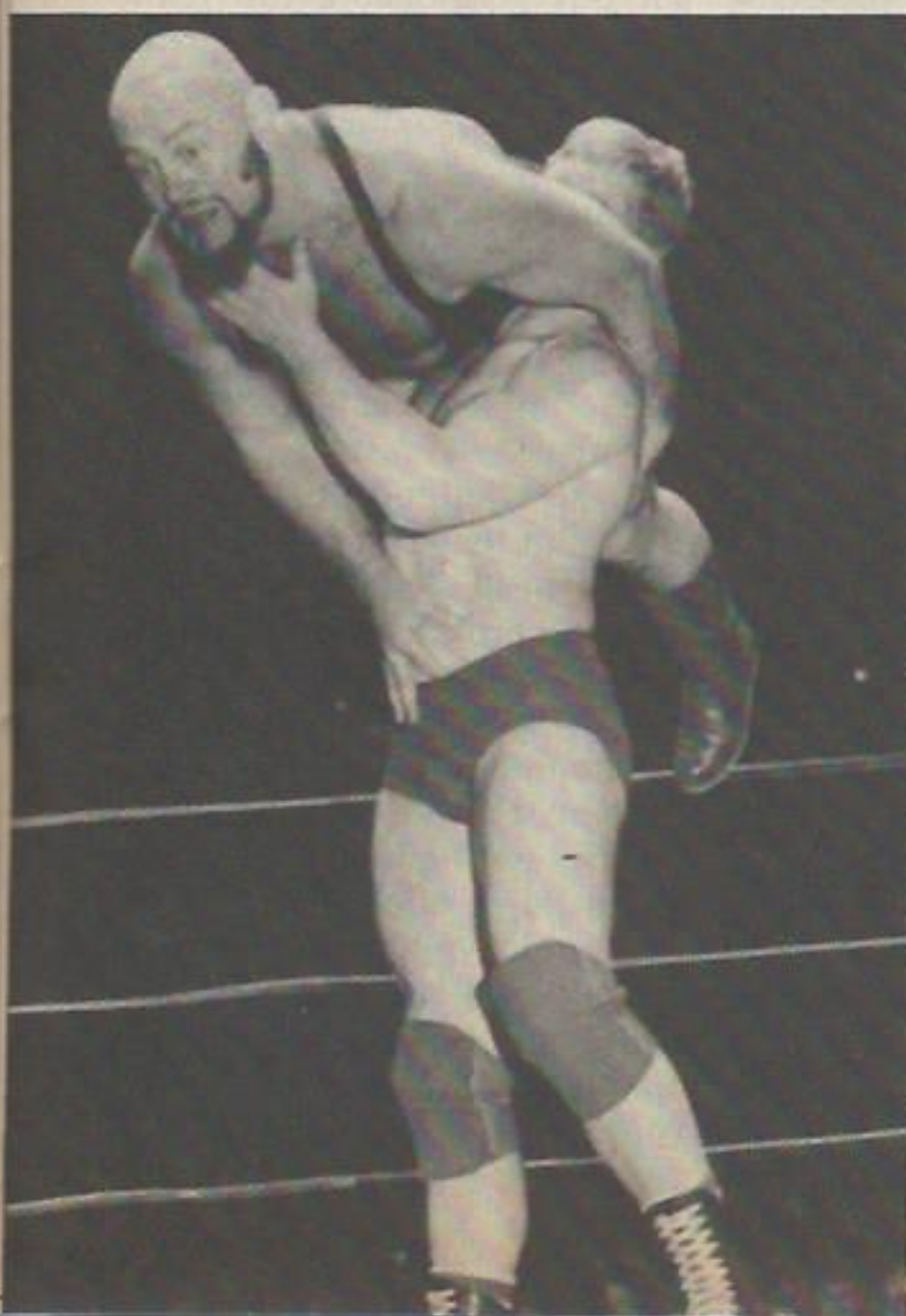
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*The action never let up when WWF champion Bob Backlund met Mid-Atlantic champion Ivan Koloff in Georgia. Koloff connects with a looping right hand to the back of Backlund's head (above left). Backlund dives from the turnbuckles, tackling his opponent on the way down (above right).*

**Bruno Sammartino is uniquely qualified to offer a ringside report on the Bob Backlund-Ivan Koloff war in Atlanta. Bruno knows both these men. Bruno can offer his incisive commentaries and analysis on a truly historic moment**



*Koloff's expression indicates the pain he anticipates as a result of Backlund's bodyslam (left). Koloff's shaved head helps him slip out of Backlund's grip (above), and the Russian follows with a series of kicks with his weighted boots (below).*



PHOTOS BY EMMY YATES



# U.S. Champion Roddy Piper: “DUSTY RHODES HAS MADE ME GREAT”

Until Roddy Piper wrestled Dusty Rhodes, he was merely the object of local scorn. Now that match has catapulted Piper into the forefront of national wrestling celebrities. And Piper, always gracious, thanks Rhodes for this great opportunity. But Rhodes isn't too appreciative of the thanks

PHOTOS BY EDDIE CHESLOCK

**W**RESTLING IS A strange sport. Sometimes a man will live in the shadows, waiting for his break. He will be extremely talented. He will have achieved a measure of success. Yet he will not yet have reached the sort of acclaim and attention due his skills.

Like Roddy Piper. The United States heavyweight champion was, not long ago, an immensely talented man. He had defeated Ric Flair for a prestigious local title. He had already polarized the Mid-Atlantic area with his cerebral cunning and revolutionary wrestling maneuvers.

Yet few outside the Mid-Atlantic area, the Pacific Northwest, and his hometown in Scotland, really knew him.

“I wasn't yet a household word,” Piper said wryly.

Then Piper signed for a match against Dusty Rhodes. And this thrilling match transformed Piper from a local villain into a national wrestling celebrity.

“Dusty Rhodes made me



great,” said Piper. “I didn't have the name factor until I wrestled Rhodes. I'm really grateful to the fat guy for making the name Roddy Piper known to all the wrestling fans across the world.

“See, sometimes you gotta knock down a big star before people accept you. I whipped Flair, but that doesn't really count since Flair is far from a star, more a pretty boy who rises just above the level of a preliminary wrestler.

“I've whipped Rick Steamboat, but that isn't saying much. That's because Steamboat isn't much, merely a primitive animal who wrestles exclusively on instinct since he has no innate intellect.

“Now I don't want people to get the wrong impression from me. I don't think Rhodes is all that good. He's kind of slow and stupid, both intellectually and physically. But because he has spent his entire career mouthing off and building himself up, tooting his own horn so to speak,





*Roddy Piper feels his recent showing against "American Dream" Dusty Rhodes catapulted him to international prominence. (Above) Piper holds Rhodes on the ring apron by his throat.*

he has received attention totally at variance with his actual achievements.

"That is exactly the opposite of what I had been through. I have already revolutionized wrestling and already destroyed all the competition in the Mid-Atlantic area. Yet I did not yet receive my just due in the media.

"Now that I have wrestled Rhodes and the national spotlight has shown exactly how great and brilliant I am, I don't

believe I'll ever suffer from a lack of attention again. So I must thank the American Dream for catapulting me into the limelight."

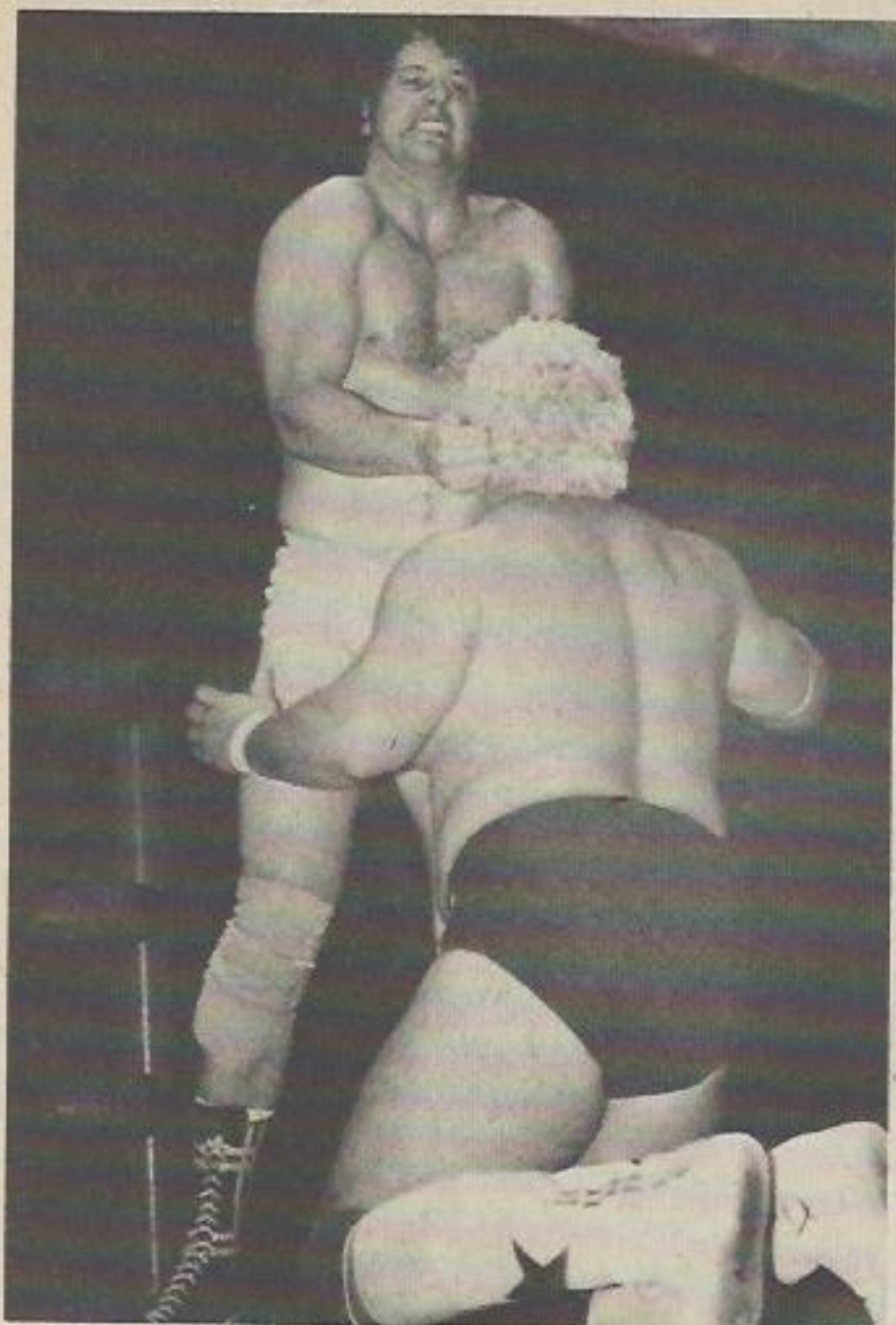
Rhodes actually regrets ever signing for the match against Piper.

"I'd heard he was a good wrestler, thought he was a tough guy and all," said Rhodes. "But he's a lot meaner than anyone might think. Fact of the matter is, Piper is one cruel SOB. But now everyone is talkin' about Piper

and how he wrestled the Dream and how he showed he belongs in the same ring with the American Dream.

"Well let me tell the world somethin' about that. The man is a bum, the man cannot wrestle, the man is a fraud who must wear skirts to get attention. I did him a favor wrestlin' him. I did him the favor. I brought my spotlight down on him and he better understand that he's nothin' alone, you hear?





*The match was certainly not as one-sided as Piper wants people to believe. Though Roddy has a firm grasp on Dusty's ear (above left), Dusty takes the advantage outside the ring (above right). Regardless of his tactics (below), Piper is very proud of his achievement.*



"The American Dream was charitable, the American Dream was just, the American Dream was decent to wrestle the bum. But I made him and I will break him. He better understand that if he thinks he's hot, then he's in for a real surprise 'cause the Dream is gonna whup his head from one end of the ring to the other, and then the world ain't gonna hear about any Roddy Piper 'cause he's gonna be on crutches," said Rhodes.

Piper shook his head.

"Pathetic, isn't he?" Piper grinned. "He should treat me nice or I won't give him any more matches. He had better watch his tongue or else I very well might pull it out of his head.

"And tell Rhodes one thing for me: No one makes Roddy Piper. I am the greatest and I will always be the greatest. I used Rhodes for what I wanted. Now I am invincible." □

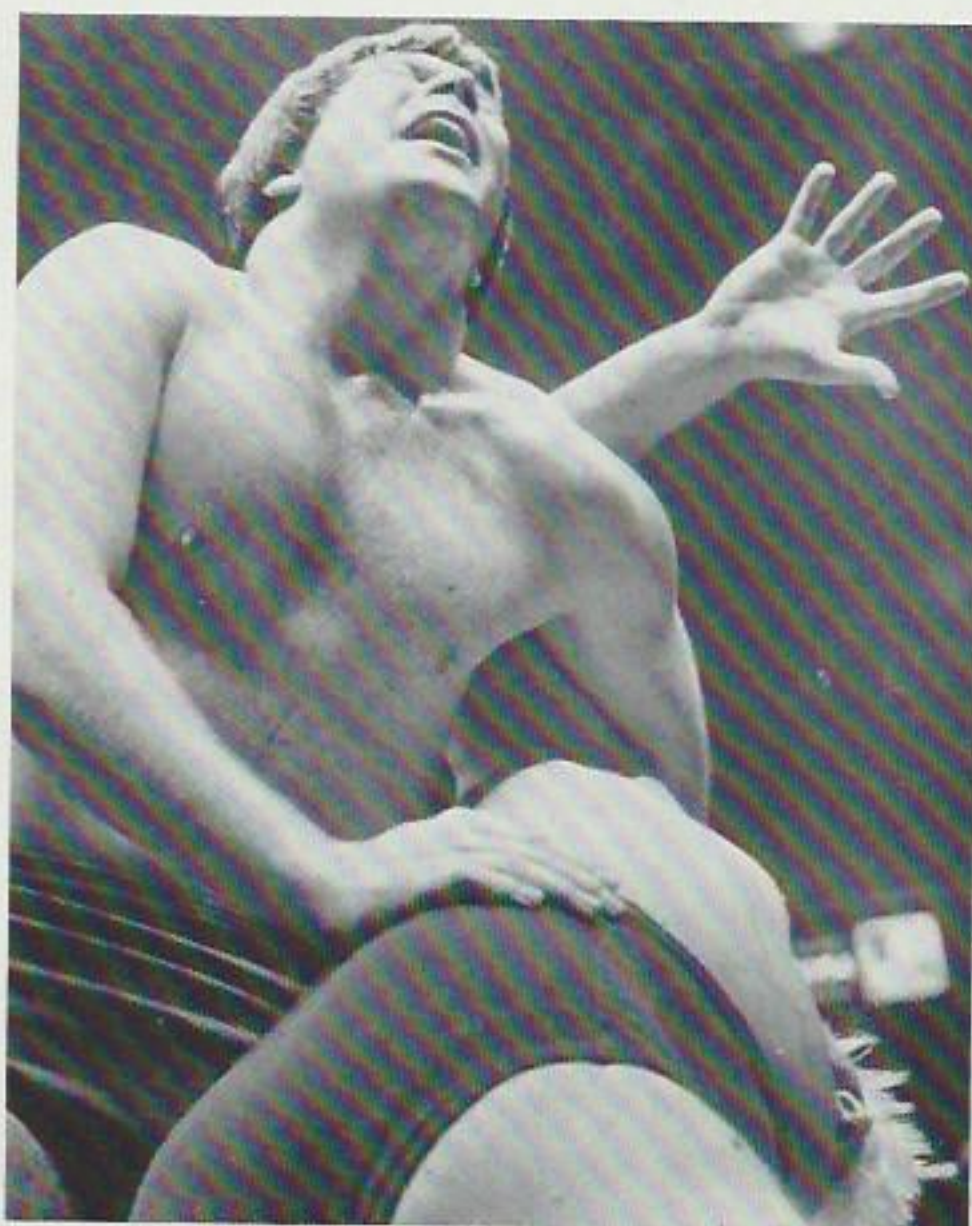


# PRO Wrestling ILLUSTRATED

T.V. SPORT

## CLOSE-UP

### TED DiBIASE



**H**IS HANDSOME FEATURES have made him a female heart-throb in every single territory he's ever wrestled in . . . He credits a great deal of his success to plain hard work and a little bit of luck . . . When he first started, Ted DiBiase swept through opponents and began believing wrestling life would be easy . . . After he lost the North American Heavyweight title to Masked Grappler, he gained a better sense of the realities of wrestling . . . For the past few months, he has been chasing Harley Race and the NWA title . . . Despite near-wins, DiBiase hasn't lost his determination or self-confidence . . . Has wrestled in the WWF, where he found great

popularity and friendship with men like Dominic DeNucci and Tony Garea . . . He wrestled in the AWA and gained even more experience . . . Presently teams with Junkyard Dog and on occasion, Robert Fuller . . . He considers Dog a really close friend who has always supported him in times of crisis . . . Certainly his greatest enemies must be The Fabulous Freebirds . . . The Freebirds nearly broke his neck and DiBiase has vowed vengeance . . . He has also been feuding with Ken Patera . . . Above all, Ted DiBiase remains faithful to the principles of both scientific wrestling and friendship.



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# CLOSE-UP

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## FAVORITE HOLD

"I am really proud of the way I use the abdominal stretch. I worked really hard on that. You have no idea how many hours I spent in the gym perfecting that move. But my success with that maneuver has heartened me. I think it's one of the best around."



## TOUGHEST OPPONENT

"I've had quite a few in my time, but I don't think there's ever been one any tougher than Ken Patera. He is really talented and really cunning. It's amazing the things he can do to another man. He's the strangest man in wrestling and he's tough."



## GREATEST MATCH

"Oh, it hadda be against Mr. Wrestling II in the New Orleans Superdome. We really went at it, tooth and nail, a long and grueling match that exhausted both of us. For me, it was a dream come true, to be able to wrestle II."



## MOST HATED

"Ah, I really want to put my fist through a wall even thinking about them. Yeah, The Freebirds. Michael Hayes, Terry Gordy, and Buddy Roberts can go straight to hell for all I care. I'm gonna pay 'em back for what they did to my neck, you can believe that."



# MANNY FERNANDEZ: SETTING THE HOUSE OF HUMPERDINK ON FIRE

**"S**OMEONE'S GOTTA DO it," muttered Manny Fernandez. He sat before his locker, preparing himself psychologically for his impending match against Mr. Pogo. "Someone has to stop Humperdink, there's gotta be a way. The man is gaining far too much power."

Fernandez balled his hands into

tight fists and pounded his knees in worried contemplation.

"You know, there comes a time in every wrestler's life when he must weigh exactly what he's all about," said Fernandez. "Sometimes you have to move beyond yourself," Fernandez gestured with his hands away from his compact body, "and look at the



*Manny Fernandez is determined to put a torch to the House of Humperdink. Manny twists Assassin #1's wrists (below), and Humperdink shows his concern (right).*



overall scheme of things.

"You have to see that there are more important things, stuff which overrides your own career, and you have to deal with that. With Sir Oliver Humperdink, well, I think he's gaining far too much power. I think it's only a matter of time before he's way too powerful to be stopped and once that happens, well, who know what'll happen to Florida wrestling?"

Humperdink has corraled some of the worst rulebreakers in wrestling into his house. The likes of Mr. Pogo, Masked Assassin #1 and Masked Assassin #3, R.T. Tyler, Sgt. Jacques Goulet, and Prof. Sonoda pose a potential crippling threat to Florida. And

**Manny Fernandez won't stand by and allow Sir Oliver Humperdink and his house of loonies to take over Florida wrestling. Manny will pick them off one at a time or all at once, if need be. But can he stop them?**

PHOTOS BY JERRY PRATER & PAUL BAUMAN



Fernandez is not the sort of man to sit around and allow his beloved sport to be ruined by a man like Humperdink.

"I could just go on my merry way, living as I have been, knowing I'll tangle with them here and there without any coherent purpose at all," said Fernandez. "But I also know they have to be stopped dead in their tracks. Someone's gotta stop them and I feel that I'm one of the likely candidates."

Indeed, Fernandez has been a public target of Humperdink and his men.

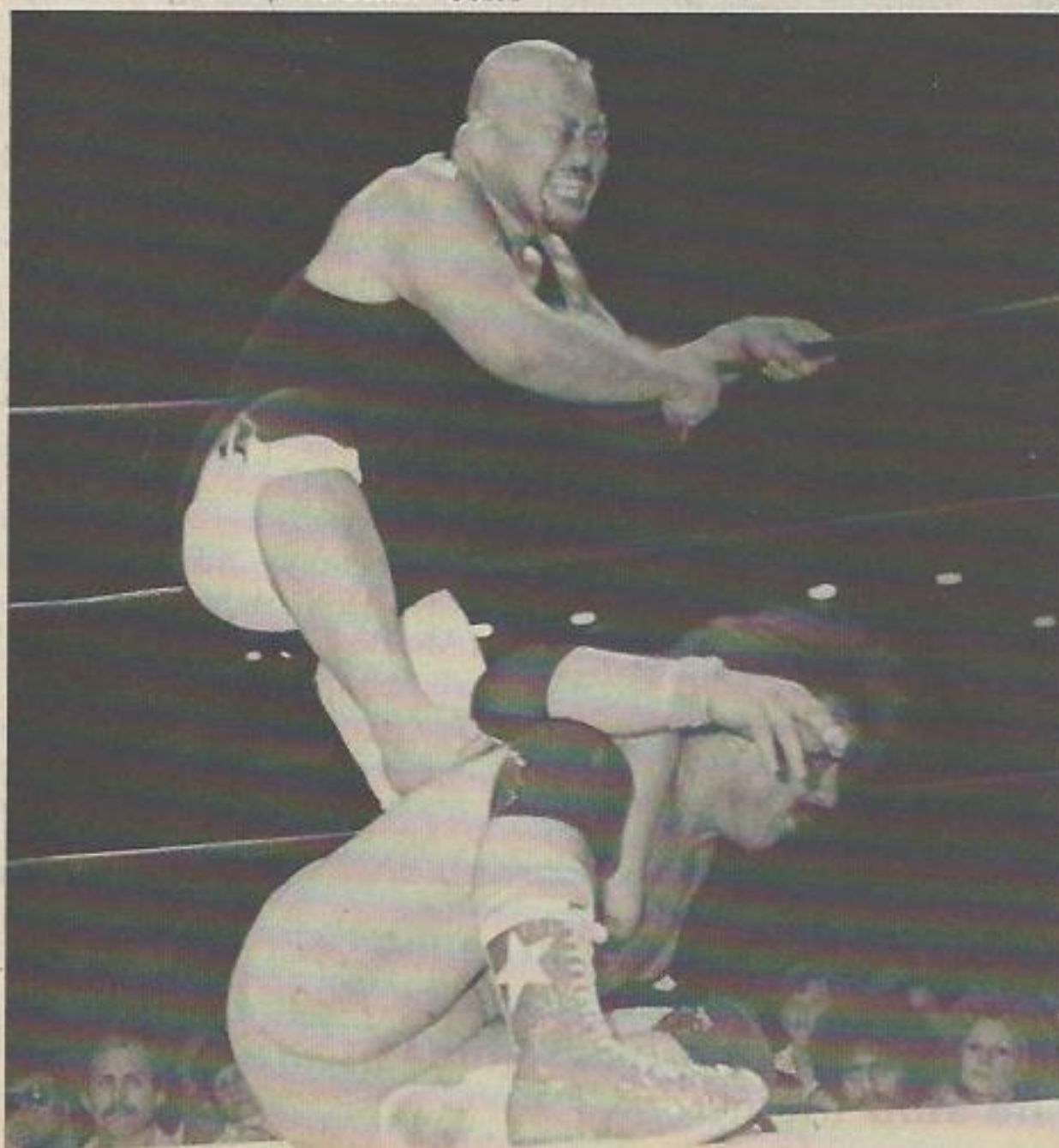
"We want Fernandez outta the state, we want him outta the area, we want him outta this sport," yelled Sir Oliver Humperdink. "He's one of the guys we got marked for extermination. He's one of those fools that only get in our way and we want to dispose of him real nice and quick."

Fernandez has calmly accepted the danger of his mission.

"What can I do," he asks. "Can I



*Fernandez takes the advantage over Mr. Pogo in a test of strength (above). Pogo, whose feet can crush wooden boards, connects to the back of Fernandez (below). Manny would like to send Pogo back to the Orient.*

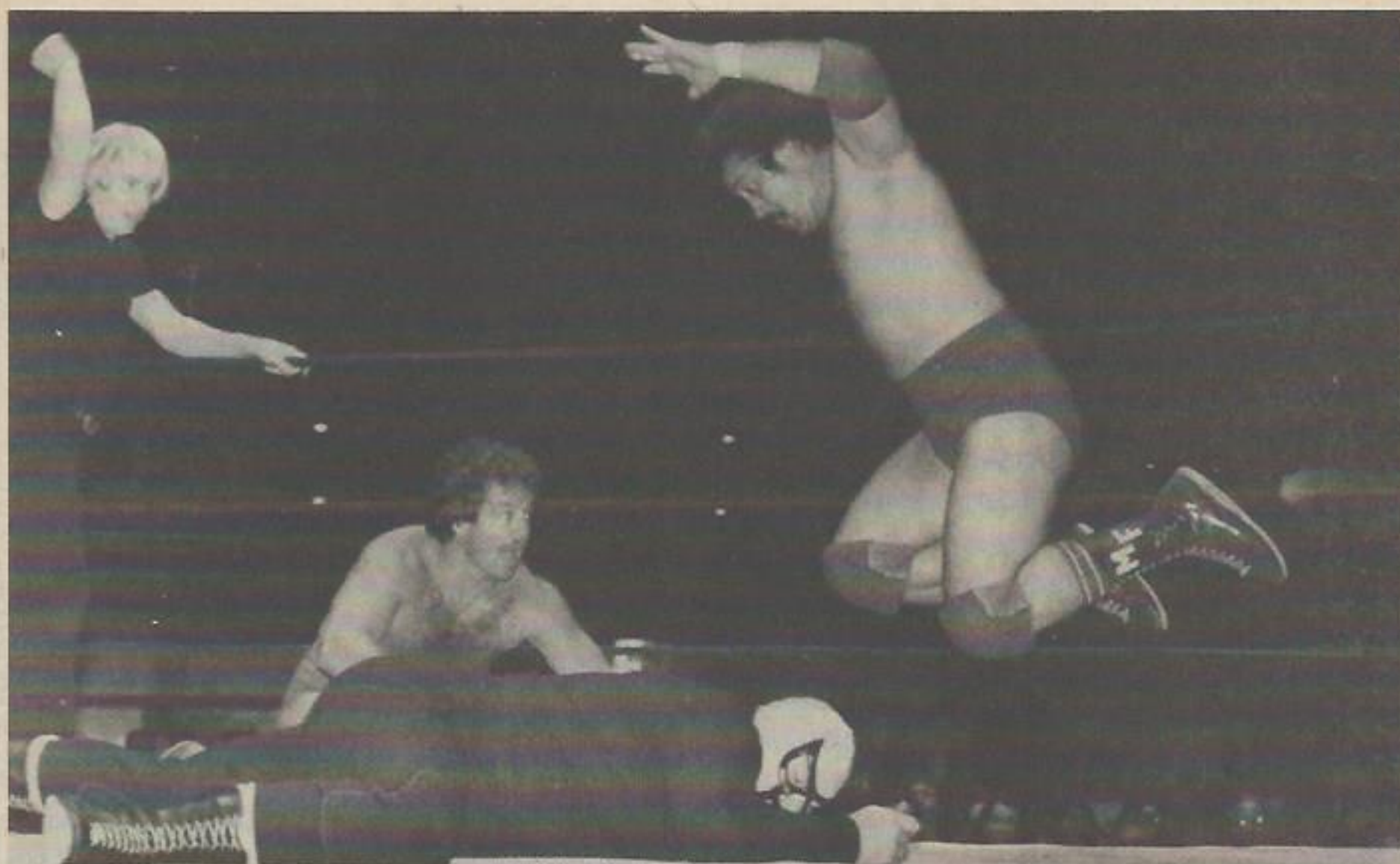


really and truly say that allowing them free rein won't affect me? Nope, that'd be a lie, I know that. I know that whenever a man like Humperdink or one of his goons gets one little step further along the path to power, it means less space for me, and that threatens my career.

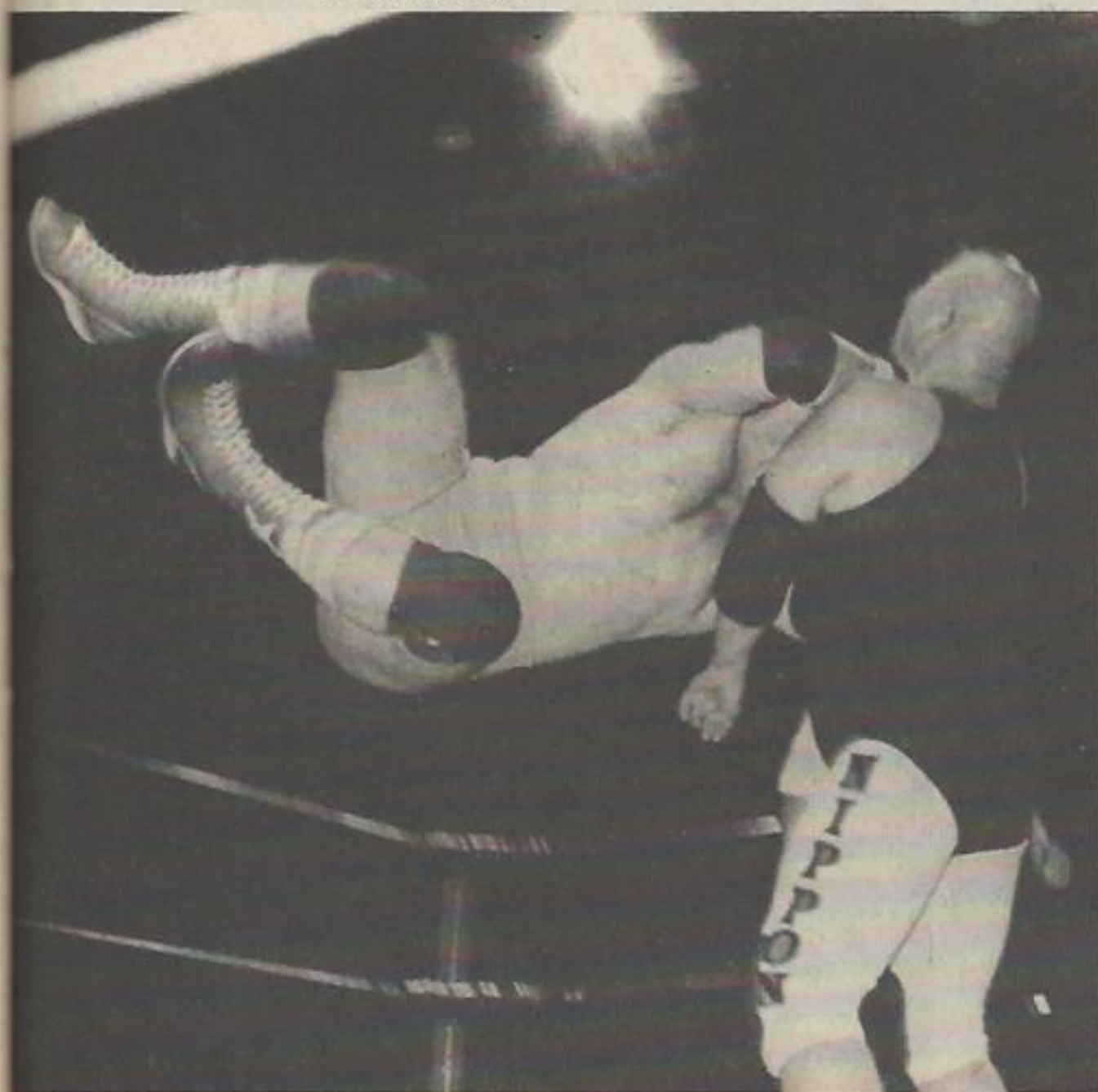
"I'm not even talking about me being one of their targets. No, being someone's target doesn't bother me one little bit, nope, not at all," continued Fernandez. "What I'm talking about is the way they are destroying people and trying to take over. You can't stand by idly and let that go on. Even if it means putting my career, or my life, on the line, I gotta do it. Will I be successful? I don't know. I don't know that I can stop them all by myself. I have allies, guys like Dusty and the Briscos and Steve Keirn and the others. We know that we have to stick together, that we have to try and pick them off one at a time.

"Whether I'm wrestling one of





*Fernandez knows that he is not alone in his quest to stop Humperdink and his men. Mike Graham holds Assassin #3 in place as Manny leaps from the top turnbuckle (above). Fernandez, a former football player, hits Pogo with a flying tackle (below).*



the Assassins or Mr. Pogo or R.T. Tyler or any of the bums that Humperdink hires to protect his fat little body, I know I'm in peril. But we have to stop the House, we just have to keep it from taking over the state.

"So I'm prepared to do my duty, to implement my sense of responsibility and obligation to a sport which has treated me well."

Humperdink cackles and waves his hands in gleeful anticipation of Fernandez's war upon his House of wrestlers.

"Fine, good, that's great," laughed Humperdink. "Let Fernandez come to us. That makes it easier. Maybe he'll wrestle close to his home so Florida doesn't have to waste so much gas bringing his body back. Yeah, that'd save a lotta energy. I like that idea a lot."

Fernandez paused at the lockerroom door, not out of hesitation, but firmness.

"I have no other choice. I have to burn down the House." □



AUGUST 1981

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# WRESTLING

VOLUME III, No. 1

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

# ENQUIRER

# RICH WINS GEORGIA TITLE;

Eyes Race's Belt Again

BY STEVE FARHOOD

ATLANTA, GA—In a stunning rebound after losing the NWA heavyweight championship, Tommy Rich has captured the prestigious Georgia title. Rich was victorious in a multi-star tournament held in Atlanta's Omni Auditorium.

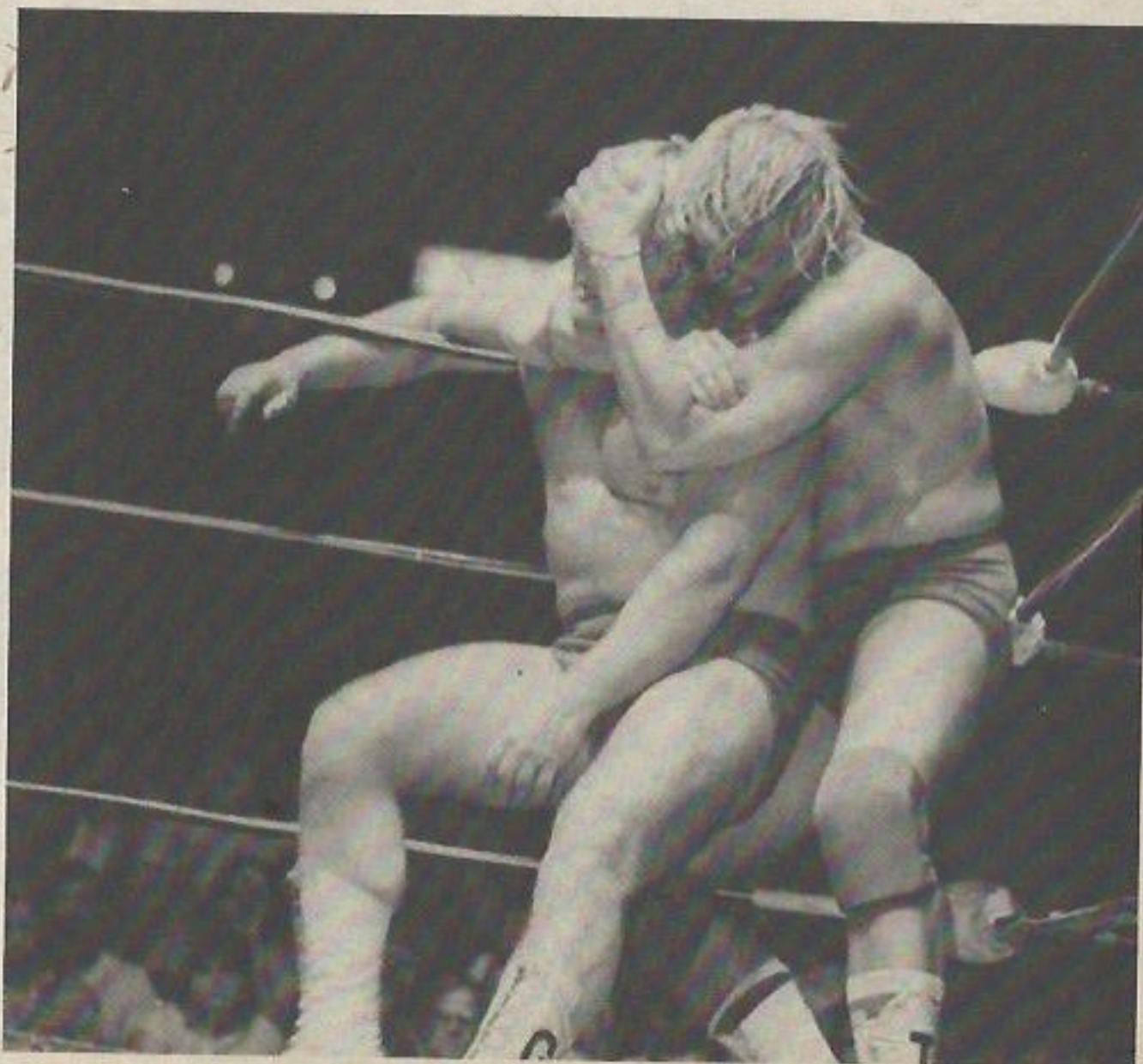
## Upsets Valentine

After a grueling semifinal round in which Rich won a hard-fought match against rugged Nikolai Volkoff, the popular blond grappler was forced to wrestle the hated Valentine with only a few minutes rest. "It was

tough, but this is wrestling, not a spelling bee," the tired Rich said later. Rich was awarded the belt when Valentine couldn't continue due to too much blood being lost.

According to the loser, he was in good condition when the bout was halted. "Hell, in this state, even the hot dog vendors are paid off by Rich," Valentine claimed. "I'm disappointed, but not surprised."

Rich considers the Georgia title his first step back to the NWA title. "Look out Race," said Rich. "I'm comin' to get you again!"



**NOT VALENTINE'S DAY:** Tommy Rich defeats Greg Valentine in the final round of the Georgia championship elimination tournament.



# NWA Announces Koloff-Flair Ban

BY BILL APTER

CHARLOTTE, NC—It is perhaps the strangest pronouncement ever issued by the NWA. In a tersely worded statement, NWA president Jim Crockett said, "From this day on, there can be no sanctioning of matches in which Ivan Koloff and Ric Flair are both scheduled for the same card." What startled veteran wrestling observers was the ban from the same card, but not from wrestling each other.



**BLOODY RED:** Russian Ivan Koloff can no longer appear on cards with Ric Flair—and vice versa.

## How Long?

The ban was prompted by the terrible feud the two wrestlers have been having. The feud has erupted on many occasions, witnessing numerous run-ins by each man during the other's matches. Crockett wouldn't say how long the ban will remain in effect. "Perhaps it can be lifted in a week, perhaps never," he said. "When these two athletes begin acting like humans and not wild animals, then we'll see."

# Bockwinkel Championship Assailed

BY PETER KING

MINNEAPOLIS, MN—Despite a petition started by a group of AWA wrestlers to have Nick Bockwinkel stripped of the AWA title, Bockwinkel is wearing the belt proudly and defending it all over the country. In a recent battle against Wahoo McDaniel, Bockwinkel retained his AWA belt, although he was disqualified for throwing the Indian over the top rope.

Many AWA scientific wrestlers feel Bockwinkel was wrongly given the belt by AWA president Stanley Blackburn. "It wasn't fair," said Greg Gagne. "You

can't just say 'Here's a world title belt.' It's something that should be won in the ring."

Bockwinkel is unimpressed by Gagne's arguments. "He's just jealous," Bockwinkel insists. "He expected his senile father to pay off Blackburn and give him the belt instead. If the punk wants the title, let him whip me for it in the center of the ring."

According to Greg Gagne, that's the very problem with having Bockwinkel as champion. "They give the belt to a guy who knows more about getting disqualified than he does about wrestling. What a shame."

# Backlund Prepares For Muraco's Challenge

BY STU SAKS

NEW YORK, NY—The Grand Wizard claims his five-year plan is about to bear fruit. "I have had Magnificent Muraco signed to an exclusive WWF contract for more than five years," the Wizard explains. "But it wasn't until a few months ago I decided to bring him here. I have been waiting until just the proper time. Now the time is here."

When asked by reporters what

"time" he meant, the Wizard's face broke into a cruel smirk. "It's Howdy-Doody time! Time for the Magnificent one to take away the WWF belt from that stupid, clumsy puppet, Bob Backlund."

## Backlund Not Worried

In his training camp in upstate New York, Bob Backlund brushed off Muraco and Wizard's challenge with a wave of his thick hand. "Muraco is just another challenger to me," Backlund said. "Perhaps he's a little tougher than most. But I've beaten everyone thrown at me. Muraco will be no different."

Magnificent Muraco claims otherwise. "Once the Asiatic spike is put into Backlund's throat," Muraco said, "it is all over. Backlund's title and life will gurgle away onto the mat."

# AROUND THE GLOBE

TAMPA, FL

Jerry Lawler has come to Florida to battle the Funks. "They ran from me in Tennessee," claims Lawler. "They can't hide from me. I'll go after their butts no matter where they go!"

CHARLOTTE, NC

Sgt. Slaughter, one of the most vicious men in the WWF, has been seen here negotiating with promoters. Slaughter has made it clear that he plans on using his cobra clutch to finish off the career of Rick Steamboat, whom Slaughter calls a "pansy."

ATLANTA, GA

State champion Tommy Rich is "readying himself for upcoming battles against Ken Patera and Bruiser Brodie. Also waiting in the wings for a title bout is Jimmy "Superfly" Snuka. Tommy had better be careful as all of these challengers are capable of ending his title reign.

NEW ORLEANS, LA

Wrestling commissioners are trying to take away the managerial license of Frank Dusek. Dusek, who manages Super Destroyer and Masked Grappler, often interferes on behalf of his proteges, and officials have had enough.

MEMPHIS, TN

Kevin Sullivan, now a vicious rulebreaker, is feuding with Bill Dundee. Sullivan says he has never been happier, now that he is through with scientific wrestling. "I feel like a real man now," he stated.



# LOOKING AT...

## Matt Brock:

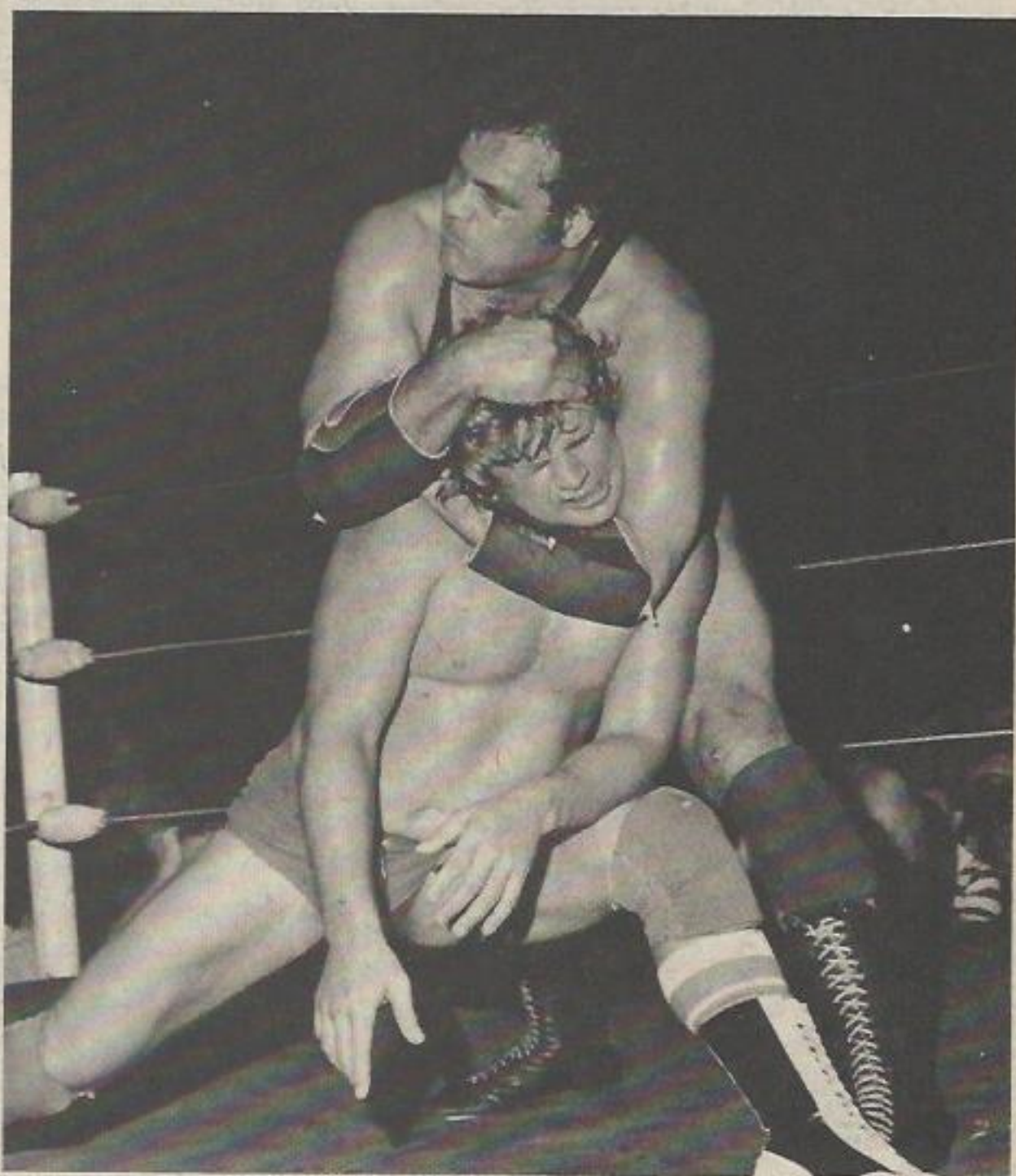


**S**OMETIMES I TRY and look at a guy for too long and feel the bile creeping up my chest. Sometimes it's because the man is so ugly that I must turn away. Then other times I feel bile creeping up because I'm angry.

And then there's this time. Fear. Yes, Matt Brock fears King Kong Mosca.

Let me just explain this. No, I don't fear him in a physical sense. No wrestler has ever come after me, though Crusher did put me atop a wooden beam in a bar one night and wouldn't let me down until I joined him and his three pals in what must've been the 300th chorus of "When Polish Eyes Are Smiling." That's about as close as Matt's ever gotten to physical abuse. Well, there was a hatcheck girl, but that's another story—and one I'm ashamed of.

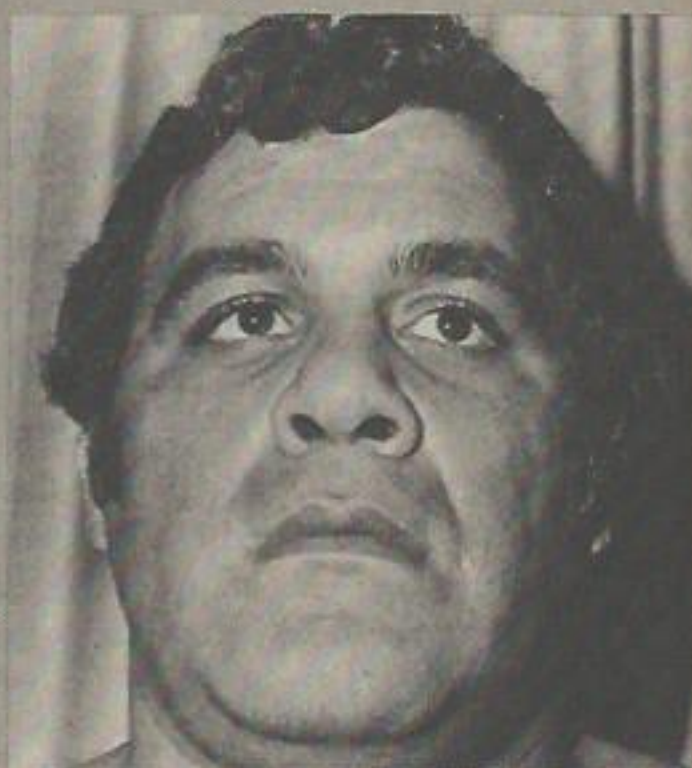
But Mosca exudes cruelty. There is cruelty and *there is* cruelty. Mosca disturbs me even more than say, Killer Khan. Khan is bestial. Mosca has a deliberate sadism about him. He appears, on the surface, ponderous until you realize it is the contemplation of a cougar preying on some helpless animal.



King Kong Mosca has the look of a killer in his eyes as he attempts to squeeze the consciousness from Dick Slater. In Matt Brock's view, the calculated madness of Mosca makes him even more dangerous than a Sgt. Slaughter or Killer Khan.

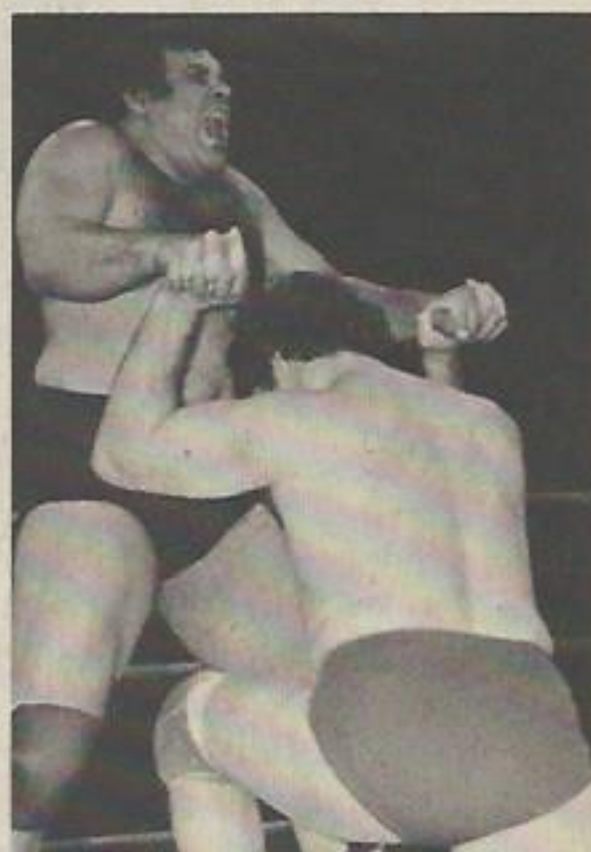


# KING KONG MOSCA



*Mosca viciously throws Paul Jones to the canvas by his head (above). Few can match King Kong in the strength category (right). Now in the Northeast, Mosca is a very serious threat to Bob Backlund's WWF crown.*

That is what frightens me about him. Where are the restraints around a man like Mosca? Some rulebreakers quit when they have won. But if Mosca cares more about destruction than victory, will he stop at the sound of a bell signifying victory? Hardly. He will continue onward until all lays crushed beneath his fists.



So that is why I look at King Kong Mosca and turn away. I see the face of evil incarnate, of uncontrolled destruction. And I shudder a bit and realize that this is truly the only time I really need a drink. □

I've seen Mosca in action on more than one occasion. I've seen him up in Canada and now I've seen him in the WWF. I have seen his look and that is what frightens me. It is the look of a killer. Not a psychopath like Khan or Sgt. Slaughter. Those men are demented. But Mosca's dark eyes narrow until they are slits of murder. You can look into his eyes and see how he would take Backlund's life and not think twice about it. To a man like Mosca,

violence is as natural as pouring milk into his coffee.

There is no place in wrestling for men like that, though I imagine that inherent violence of the sport must inevitably breed such mutant animals. Eventually, men like Mosca rise up in the ranks. They lack the civility or the grace and have no past to latch onto. They think only of destruction. Not even victory, for I truly don't think Mosca cares as much for triumph as he does for violence.



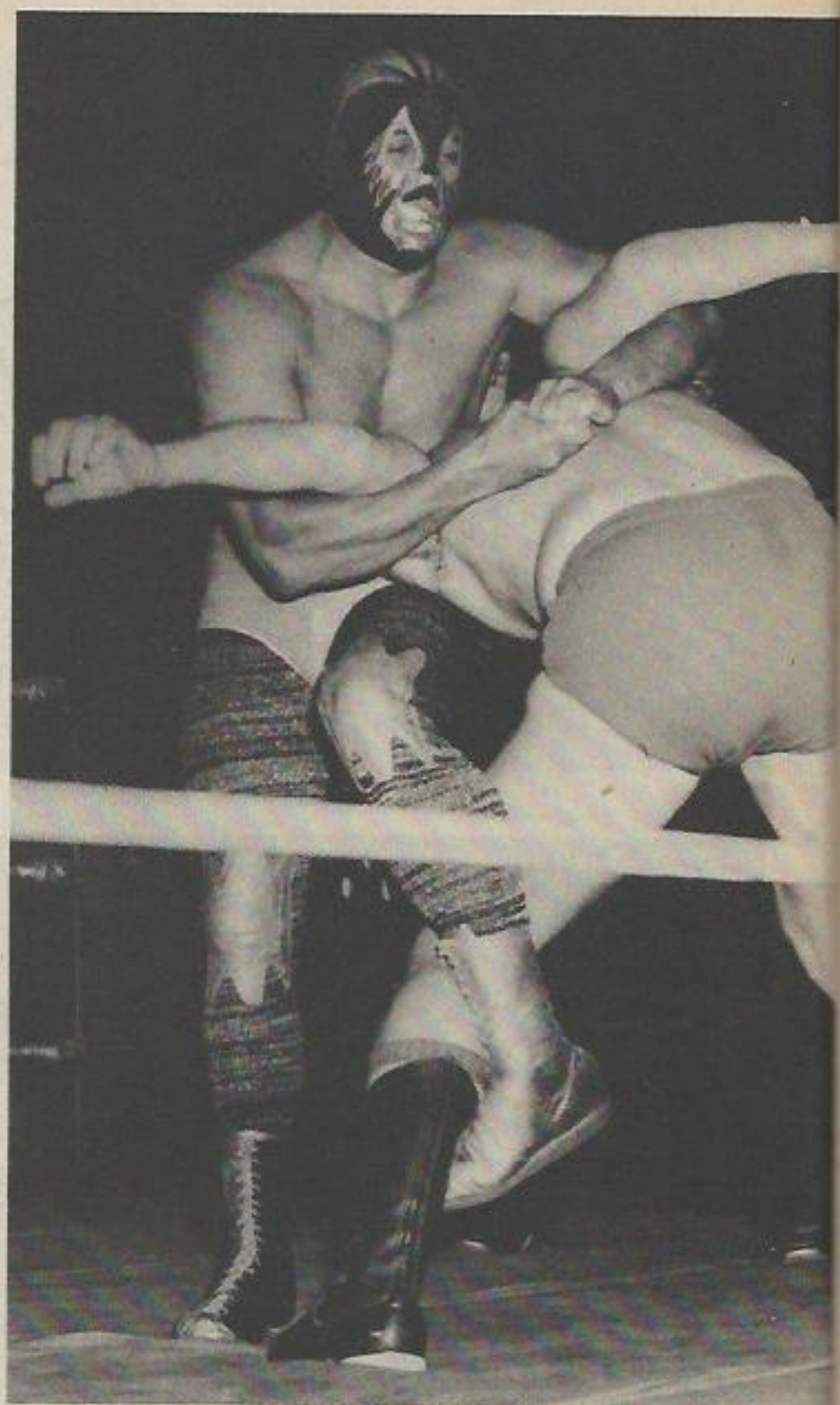
# WHY MIL MASCARAS GOT INVOLVED IN WRESTLING'S MOST VIOLENT FEUD

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Only a man of Mil Mascaras' high integrity would involve himself in as bitter a feud as that which engulfs The Funks pitted against The Briscos. But Mascaras does what he believes is best, even if it means putting his own life on the line

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PHOTOS BY GREG NAPOLI



**H**OW DID MIL MASCARAS get involved in wrestling's most violent feud?

"Who? That chubby guy? That was Mil Mascaras?" asked Terry Funk. "Come off it, you ain't gonna tell me that the dude wrestlin' with creep-face Jerry Brisco was really Mascaras. Man, you press people sure are stupid, ain't ya?"

"Anyone with half a brain, which kinda rules out you reporters, knows that the dude under the mask down in Puerto Rico was really Jack Brisco. But leave it to a Brisco to find some way to hide. I mean, you wanna talk about cowards, you gotta start with the Brisco sisters 'cause man, they can't ever fight clean, they can't

ever fight like men, they've spent their whole lives runnin' and hidin' and cowerin' and whenever you try and get them into a corner, they try and find some way to crawl away from under the rock," said Terry.

The Funks, Terry and Dory Jr., signed to wrestle Jack and Jerry Brisco in Puerto Rico. However, Jack was delayed in Japan and couldn't make the match. Enter Mil Mascaras.

"You know how it is, I try and avoid getting involved in someone else's feud," said Mil. "It is not right. Usually I avoid taking any sides at all. That is not my way."

Mascaras paused and fiddled with the bottom of his multi-

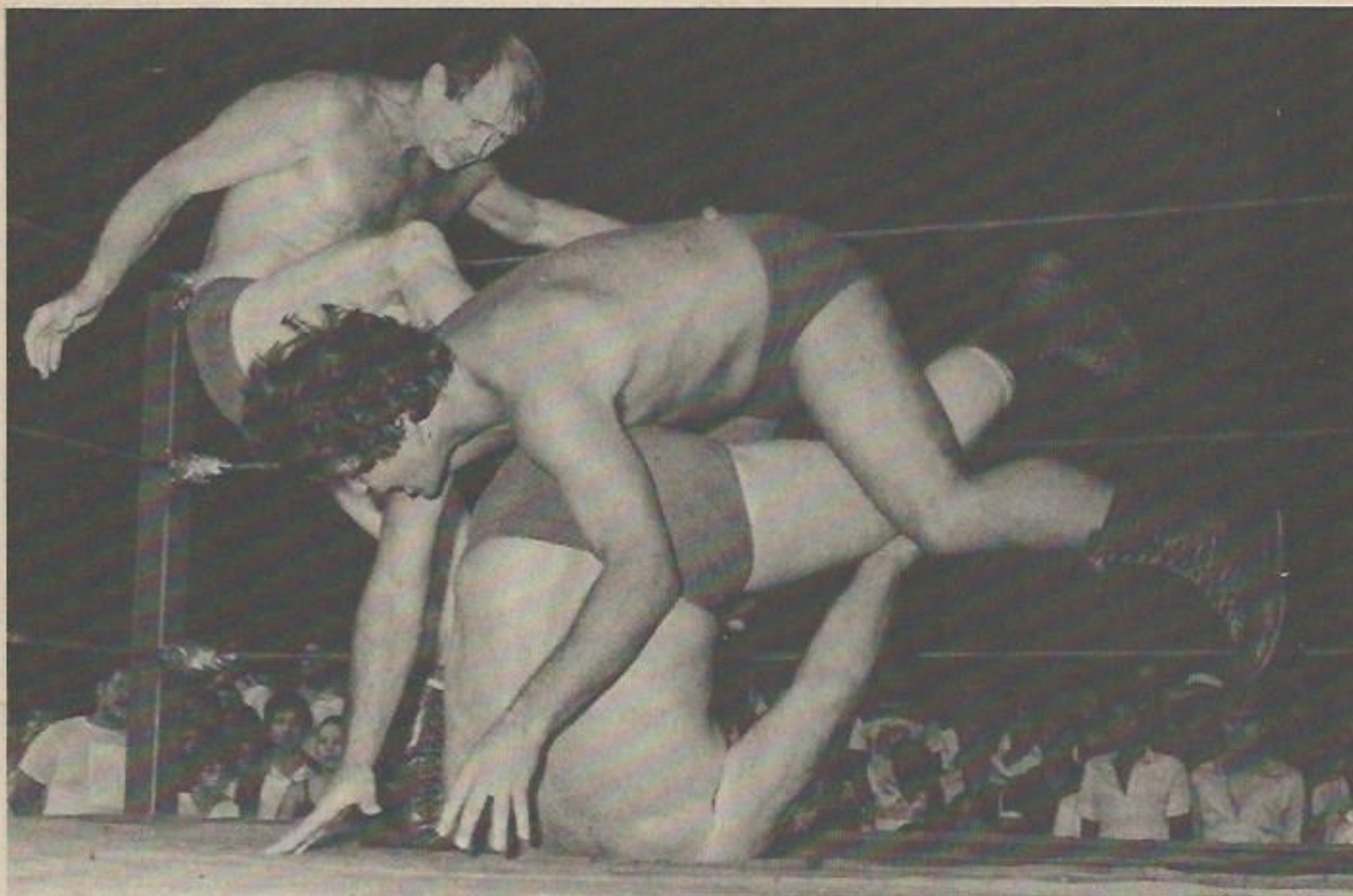
colored mask.

"But this was different, if you know what I mean," said Mil. "For too long now, I have simmered beneath the loud-mouthed taunts of the Funks. I do not particularly care for men who feel they must scream and do their wrestling into a microphone or tape recorder. I have certain beliefs about how wrestling should be conducted and the professional behavior of wrestlers both in and out of the squared circle.

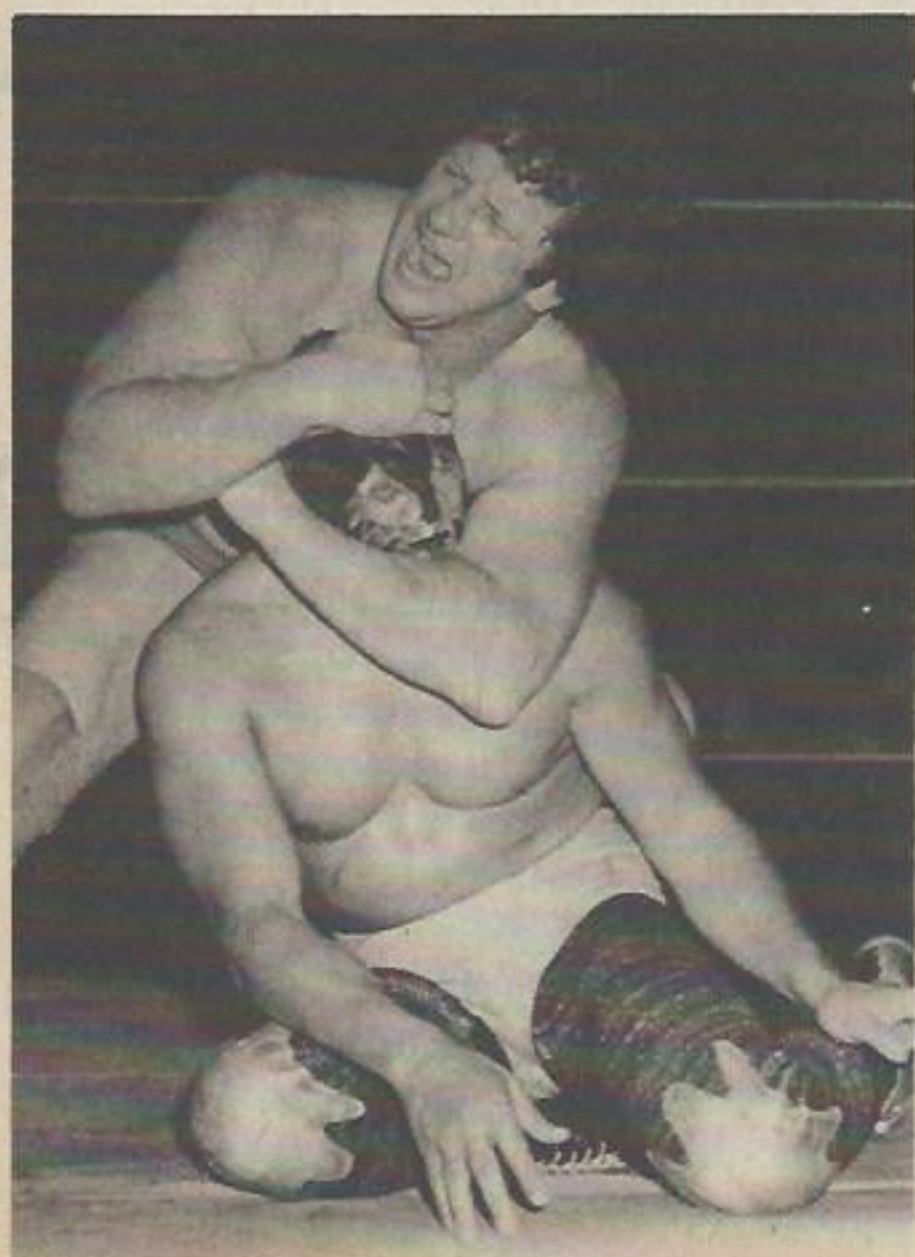
"So I do find the Funks horrid creatures. I have had words with them before. But more so, I deeply respect the Briscos. I consider them true gentlemen and believe

*(Continued on page 64)*

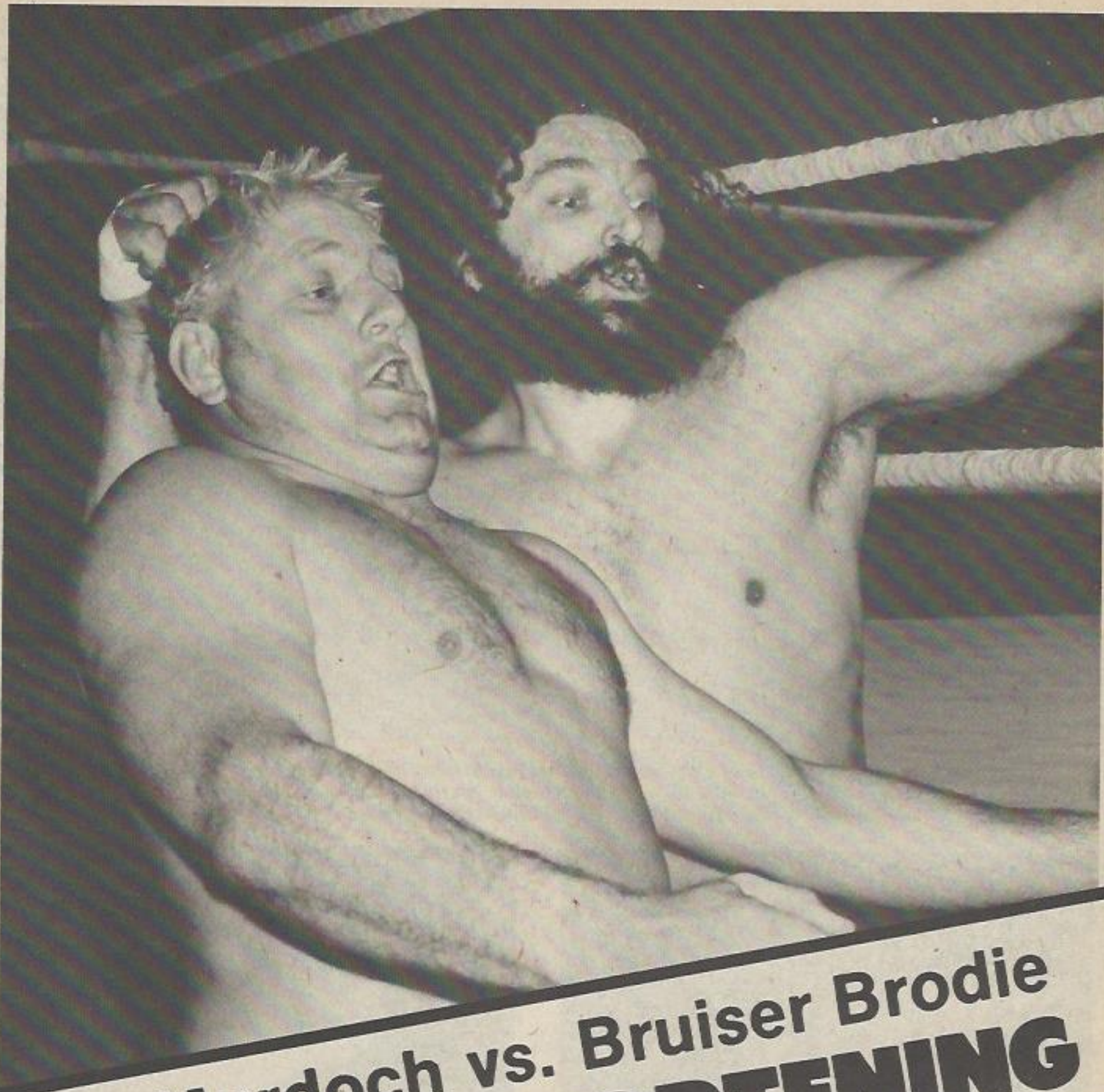




*Terry Funk receives help from his brother just in time (above). Terry does not believe the man he holds in a headlock (below left) is Mil Mascaras. Mil holds Dory's head in place for a chopping right hand (below right).*







Dick Murdoch vs. Bruiser Brodie  
**ARE THEY SHORTENING  
EACH OTHERS CAREERS?**



**Bit by bit, Dick Murdoch and Bruiser Brodie are killing each other. Their hatred has blinded them to the dangers of continuing their feud. They fail to realize that with repeated injuries incurred during their matches, they are prematurely ending their careers**

PHOTOS BY ROGER DEEM

**D**ICK MURDOCH AND Bruiser Brodie are like two germs, eating away at each other's careers. And lives. They brought this disease upon themselves. They cannot control the germs from spreading through and infecting them.

The carrier is hatred.

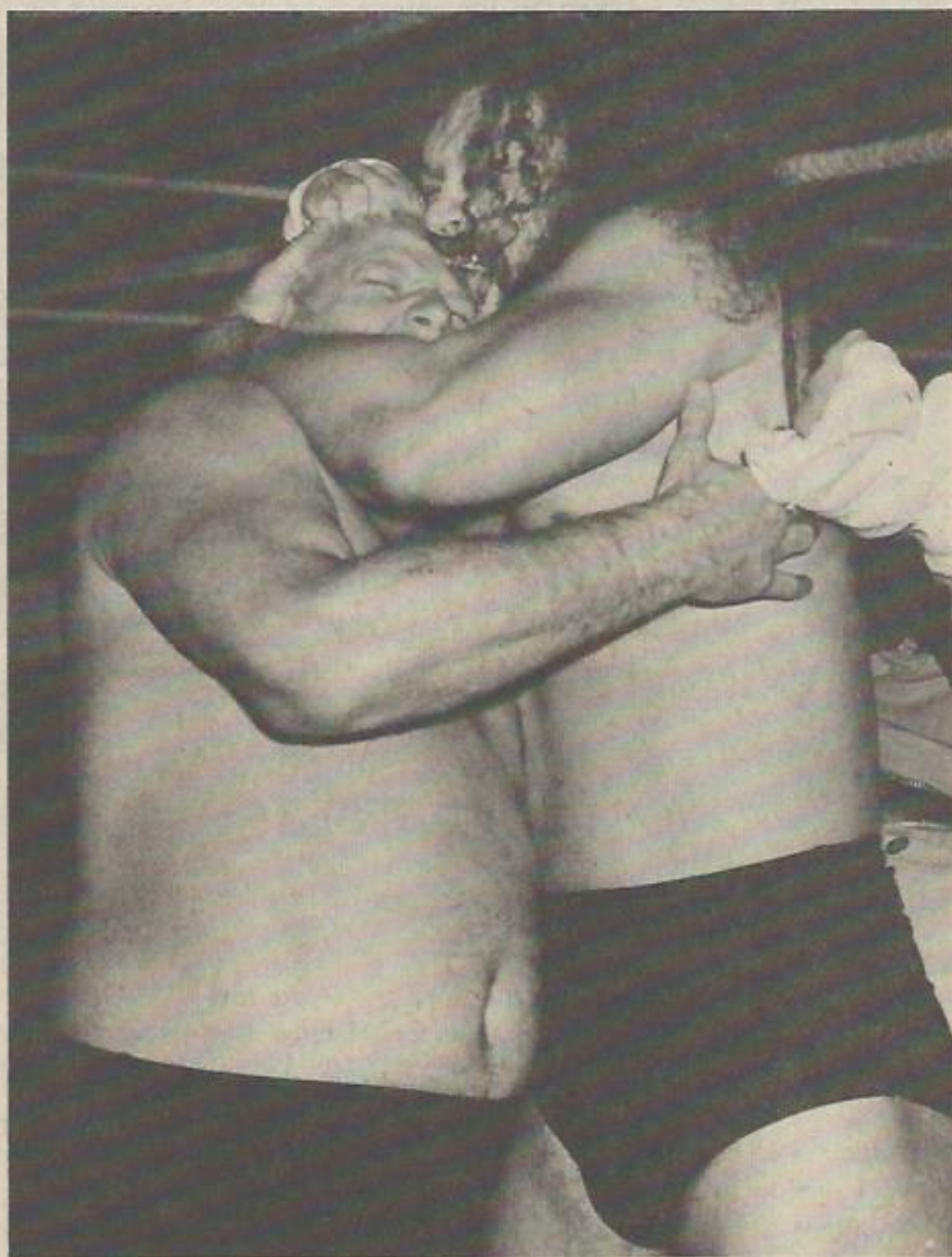
"I hate him," snarled Murdoch. "I hate his damn guts and all I want outta life is to see the insides of Bruiser Brodie spilled outta his belly and slitherin' around the ring so I can step on his intestines and kick 'em the hell outta the ring."

"Dick Murdoch?" yelled Brodie. "Dick Murdoch? You want to know what I think of Dick Murdoch? I will tell you. He is dangerous, he is a creep. I will not rest until he is lying in a mound of bandages and plaster casts and cannot even move one little pinky."

"Dick Murdoch? Even sayin' his name makes me ill. I cannot think of him still bein' alive. I cannot tolerate him. He must be destroyed, that is what I will do, what I have pledged my life to, to destroying Dick Murdoch, that is my sacred mission in life."

Murdoch and Brodie are the perfect example of a hate gone too far. Neither realizes that their hatred threatens their careers. Every time they see each other, they go all out, seeking to dismember and maim.

But each bout leaves them just a little weaker, a little less able to deal with opponents other than themselves. Perhaps once, they would have realized that. No more. Each is so consumed with hate, with a blind, relentless hate that they cannot even think of anything but their feud.



*Bruiser Brodie sinks his teeth into Dick Murdoch's forehead, drawing a flow of blood that impeded Dick's vision for the remainder of the match. These two wrestlers are dangerous to each other's career.*

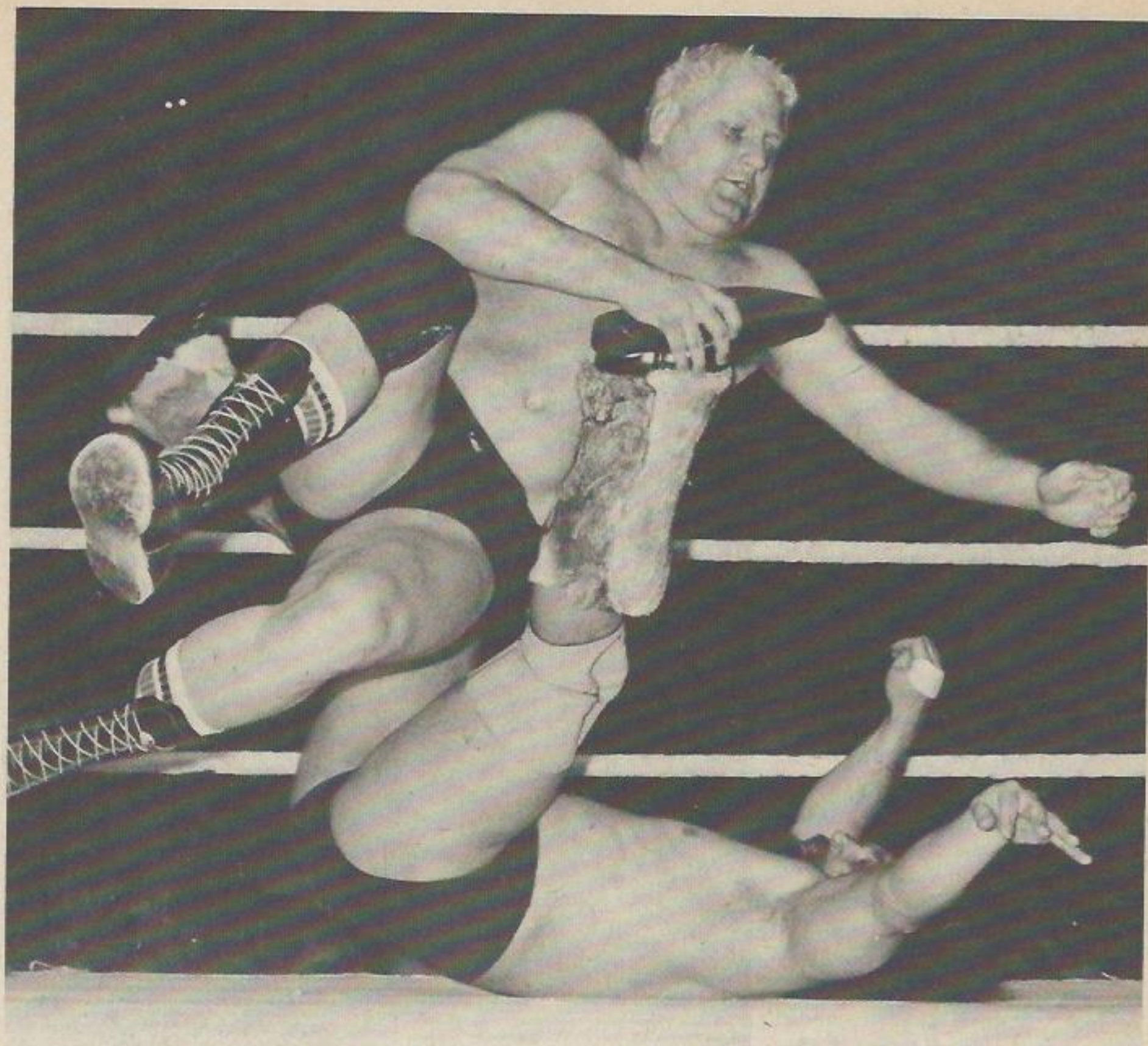
Or remember how it started.

"Yeah, well, Brodie, first time, yeah, I think he tried to gouge out my eyeballs, yeah, I think that's what happened. Positive? What the devil are you ever positive about in life, huh?" screamed Murdoch. "Can you say for sure there is anything, one thing, huh? No, all I know is I hate him, he done me

dirt, he done me wrong, and I gotta keep wrestlin' him until he is finished, a goner."

"It happened a while ago, I think," said Brodie. "I know he pulled some lousy, low-down trick and almost crippled me. Yeah, I can't exactly recall what arena it was, exactly where it was, but I know he did it, I know it was Dick





*Murdoch drops all his weight upon Brodie's left leg with only one purpose: break it into as many pieces as possible. Fortunately for Brodie, the leg did not break, though he was forced to do battle with a severe limp.*

Murdoch, and I know he laughed when I was in pain, and no man alive laughs at Bruiser Brodie, no man alive. I will not permit that, I will expunge any man who has the nerve to do that."

Curiously, their styles mirror each other. Both are rough, tough, and unrelenting. Both know no other way to wrestle other than straight-ahead brawling.

Could it be mutual jealousy?

"Jealous?" laughed Murdoch without a trace of humor. "Jealous of that wide-eyed scavenger? You gotta be kiddin'. He doesn't belong in the same ring with me, you know

that, he doesn't deserve to even be near me in the ratings. He is slime. To even compare us is an insult and not the sort I'll ever take from any man."

"If Murdoch didn't lie, cheat, use foreign objects, and try and pay off refs, then maybe you could say we have similar styles. But that's not the way it is," snarled Brodie. "He has tried to copy me because he knows how great I am and then he turns around and tries to stick a shiv in my back."

Yet a certain jealousy does present itself. Certainly other brawlers have managed to co-exist

in a sense of reasonable calm. Yet neither would even contemplate an end to the feud.

"The end of the feud is Brodie's funeral," said Murdoch.

"When he cannot breathe, that's the end," said Brodie.

And by wrestling each other repeatedly, they are gnawing away at their own careers. They grow progressively weaker, progressively more obsessed, less clear-minded.

Neither Bruiser Brodie nor Dick Murdoch, understand the real enemy is not staring across the ring, but smoldering within. □



# WHAT THEY ARE SAYING

(Continued from Page 29)

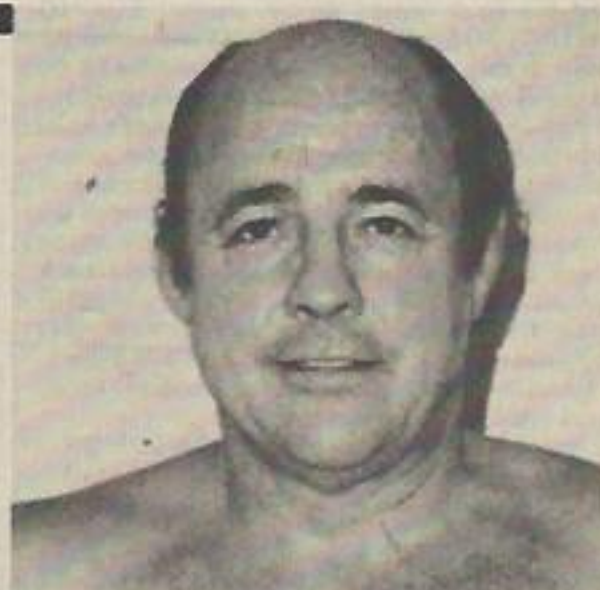
## KING KONG MOSCA

"About two years ago, I was wrestling this young kid. I was beating him easily. Then, he dared me to hurt him. 'I can take anything you dish out, Mosca!' he said. Today, he's working in a car wash. He couldn't take anything I dished out. Serves the punk right. Nobody dares King Kong Mosca and gets away with it!"



## VERNE GAGNE

"Right now, I'm enjoying retirement. Not worrying about new challengers, tight traveling schedules, or cheating managers is a wonderful treat. Yet, every morning, I get restless, thinking I should be somewhere doing something. I always thought it'd be really easy to retire and leave wrestling behind. I guess I was wrong."



## KILLER KHAN

(Through his interpreter Fred Blassie) "I don't care what people think of me. The average wrestling fan has the intelligence of a retarded ant. Who are they to tell me how to wrestle? Fans are totally ignorant about wrestling—and how to tie their shoes and how to distinguish between left and right. The only smart fan is one who cheers for me!"



## JUNKYARD DOG

"All my life I've been a junkyard dog. Nothing has ever come easy for me. I never really had much natural wrestling talent. I had to work on it. In high school, I was a substitute on the wrestling team. By the end of the year, I was the team's star. The other guys had more ability than I did. I wanted to win more than they did. So I won."





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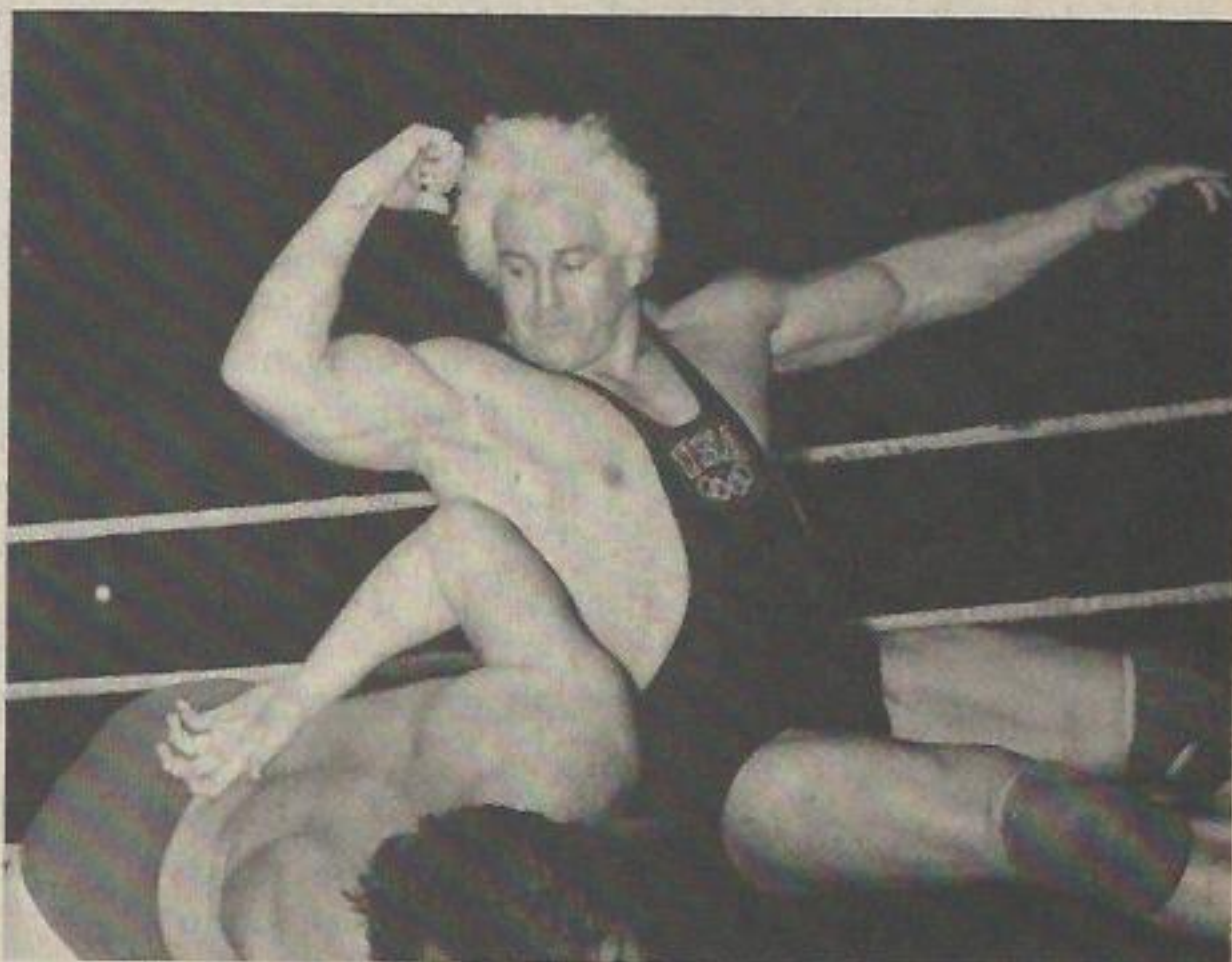
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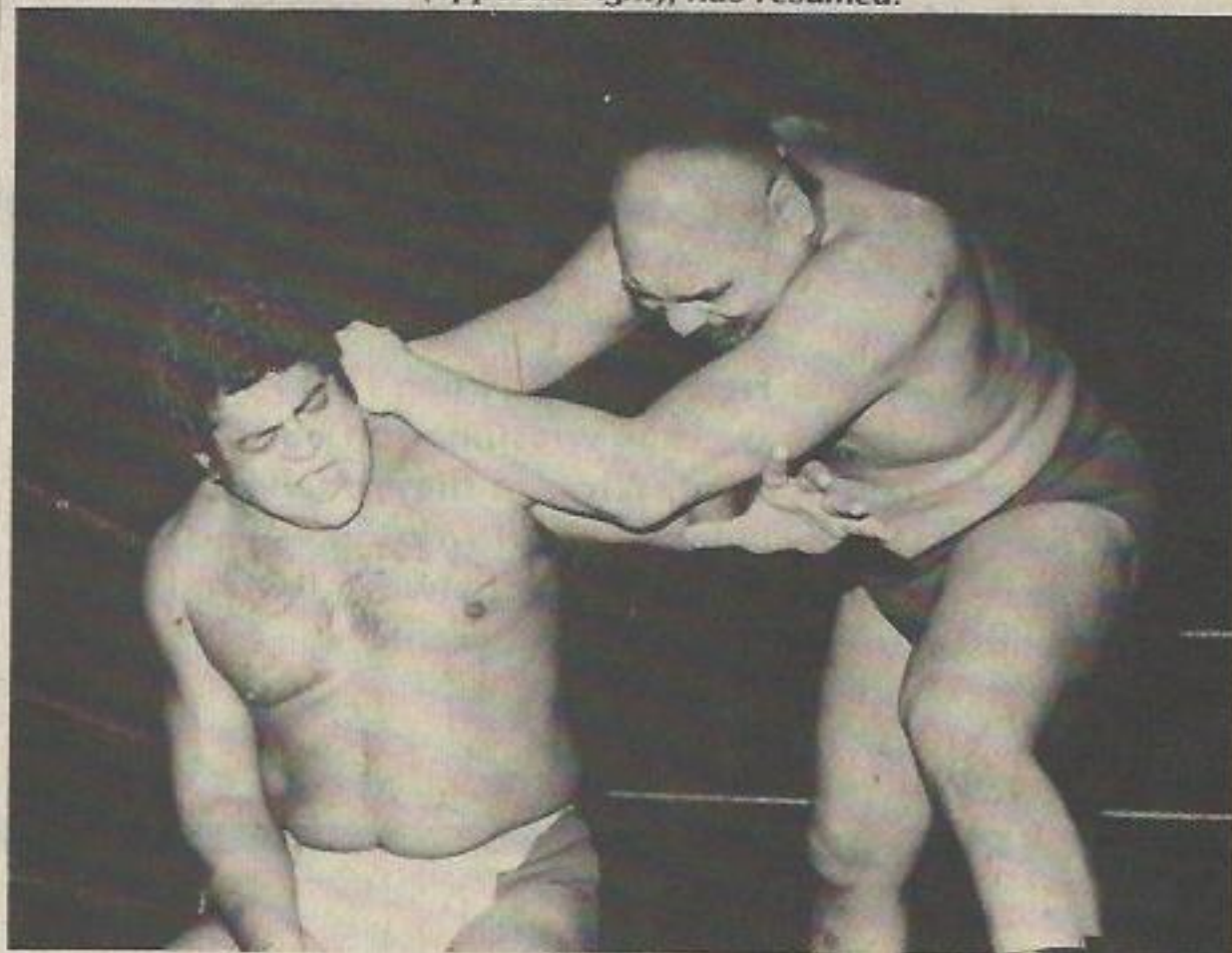
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**AT RINGSIDE**

(Continued from Page 8)



*Ted DiBiase tries to protect his back from Ken Patera's flying elbow (above). Pedro Morales battles Killer Khan, the man who broke Andre the Giant's leg (below). The feud between the Funks and Briscos, at its peak in 1974 as Dory bends back Jack's wrist (opposite right), has resumed.*



on their own accord... Bruce Reed is a hot rookie to keep your eyes on. He's wrestling in Georgia... Bruiser Brodie is feuding with Abdullah the Butcher.

Wrestlers are lining up to see who can avenge Andre the Giant's broken leg and soundly defeat Killer Khan. Pat Patterson, Pedro

Morales, and Rick Martel have been unable to extract revenge so far... Ken Patera boasts that he had soundly defeated Ted DiBiase 35 times. Ted says it isn't true and is out to prove that Patera cannot back up his words in the ring.

The newly formed team of Jerry Stubbs and Ken Lucas is hot on the



trail of Randy Rose and Dennis Condrey. "We will run them out of the Tennessee area!" Stubbs vows . . . Buggy McGraw is headed to Texas mats . . . Manny Fernandez is already active in the "Lone Star" state.

Jack Brisco has been wrestling in Memphis, Tennessee. Jack plans a quick return to Florida where he and brother Jerry plan to renew their feud with Dory Funk Jr. and Terry Funk. "My feelings toward the Funks has never changed," says Jack. "In the early '70s, Jerry and I had some really heavy run-ins with them. Now they seem intent on



ruining Florida wrestling. Jerry and I will do everything in our power to make certain the Funks cannot spread their evil ways over the state. I hope our fans come out and support us."

Mike Sharpe is back in Georgia after a long absence . . . Jimmy Snuka is headlining Atlanta cards . . . Edouard Carpentier is feuding with Don Kent in Michigan . . . Larry Zbyszko is planning to return to the WWF . . . The Spoiler and Alberto Madril are teaming to try and beat Gary Hart's team of Kabuki and Chan Chung in Texas.

That's all for now. See you at the matches! □

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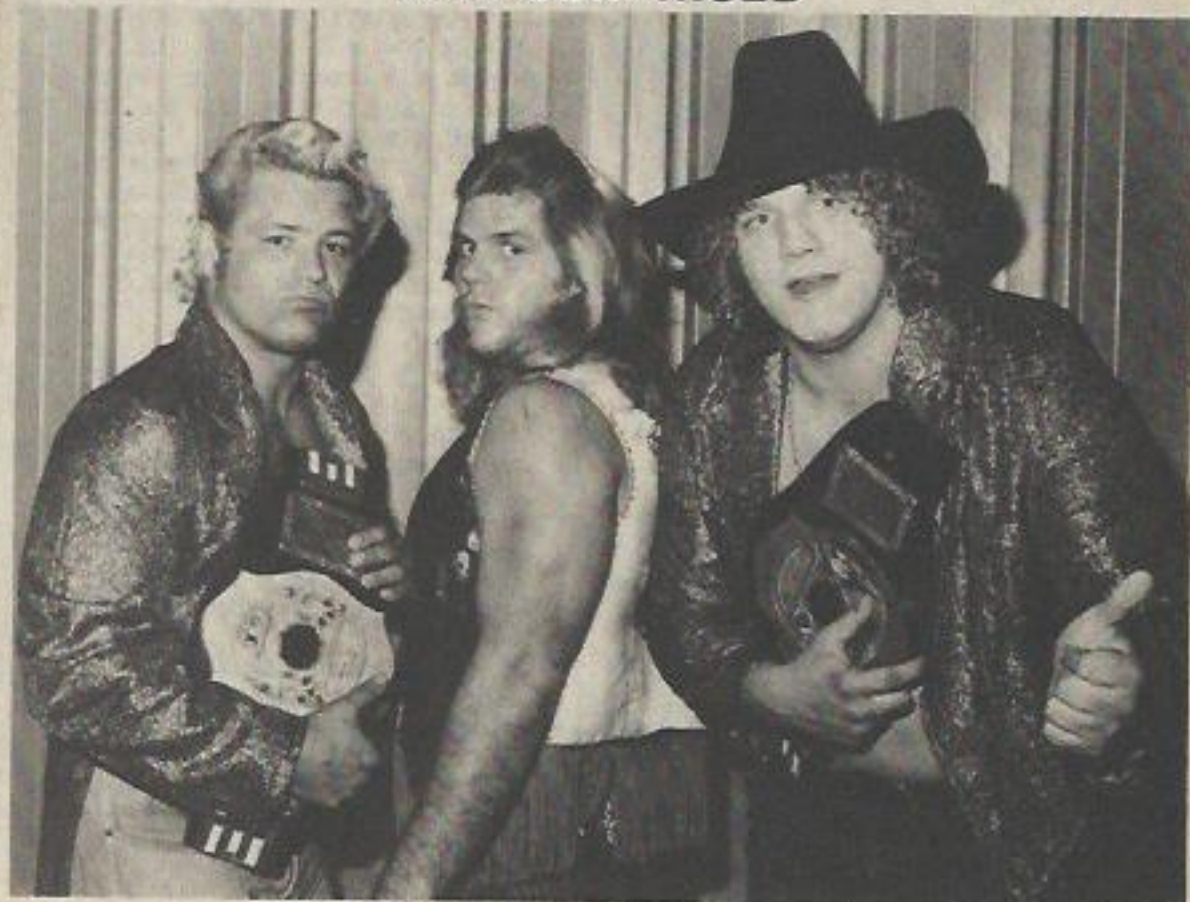
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## MORGENSTEIN REPORT

(Continued from Page 12)

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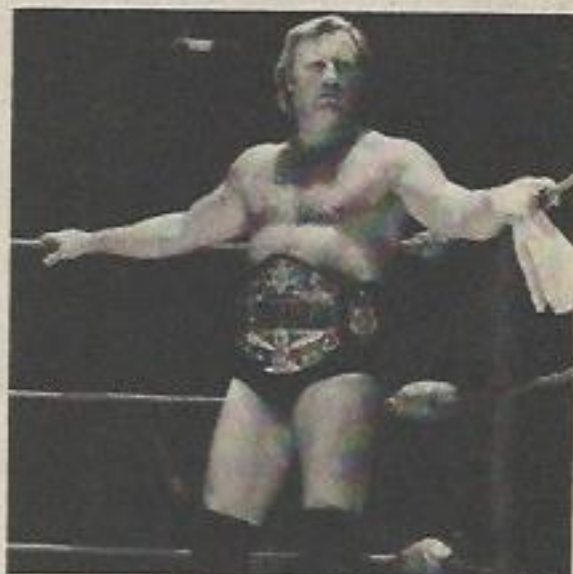
### THE FABULOUS FREEBIRDS

I'd always suspected the so-called Fabulous Freebirds, or Fabulous Chickens, of being cowards. Now their attempts to garner support and allies for their diseased assault upon Georgia wrestlers underlines this belief. The Freebirds simply aren't talented enough to make it on their own. They

need cheating and they need equally treacherous allies to enable them to preserve their perch atop the Georgia tag team ladder. But I believe that their recent attempts evidence fear and insecurity. Perhaps they see their cruel reign coming to an end and seek to maintain it at any cost.

### BOCKWINKEL BACK AGAIN

Unlike colleague Matt Brock, I cannot find much admiration in my soul to applaud Nick Bockwinkel's return as AWA champion. I think his resolve and determination obscures the man's basic venal soul. He will soon make short order of competition in the AWA. Obviously, Bockwinkel has planned on his return in many, many ways. Wait for a demonic purge of scientific wrestlers to hit the AWA. You can bet that Nick Bockwinkel is behind that



**NICK BOCKWINKEL**

purge. Hopefully, there will be someone left to pick up the pieces. □



# KING'S COURT

(Continued from Page 6)



"They called me crazy, didn't they?" the Wizard said. "Of course they did. The peasants called Edison crazy, and Columbus, too. Those too stupid to comprehend great intelligence always call a genius crazy."

Now, of course, the Wizard's strategy seems clear. Muraco is currently in the WWF, and he is a sensation. Scientific wrestler after scientific wrestler have been bludgeoned into defeat by Muraco's vicious Asiatic spike. The Five-Year Plan now seems clear.

"I had to wait until the proper time before summoning Muraco to the WWF. It turned out to be five years. It could have been a few months, or maybe even a few decades. It didn't matter. Now I know the time is right. And that is

*Nobody is quite sure what Muraco's WWF intentions are, but judging from what he is doing to Dusty Rhodes, scientific wrestlers had best be prepared for anything.*

why the Magnificent one is here."

The Wizard does not reveal why he decided this is the right time to turn Muraco loose on the WWF. Some believe he feels Bob Backlund is ready to fall. Others claim Muraco's mission is to cripple Bruno Sammartino. The Wizard only smirks viciously to each of the claims.

"Soon you will see," he says. "And all of you bullies like Backlund and Sammartino and Morales who used to push me around when I was younger will soon learn firsthand the revenge of a genius may be slow, but when it comes, it is brutal and final." □

DR. A. S. MAKES HIS PATIENTS

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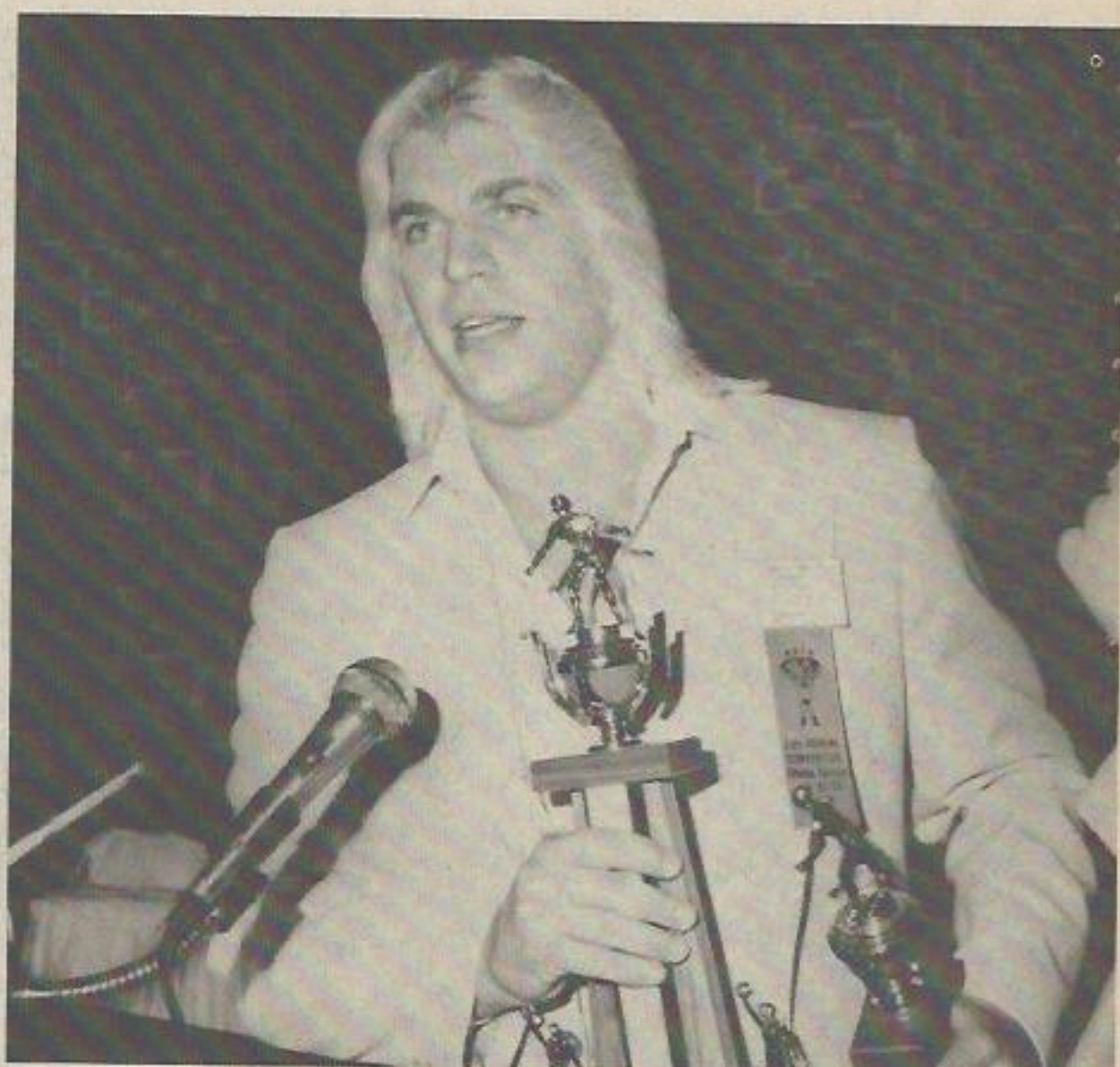
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## DRESSING ROOM CONFIDENTIAL

(Continued from Page 10)



Rich, proudly receiving honors from the Wrestling Fans International Association, likes to spend time on the beach, listen to music, and occasionally do some dancing.

Rich, dressed in University of Georgia gym shorts, a *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* T-shirt, knee-high sweat socks, and sneakers, checked under the hood of his Mazda RX-7 before setting out on his day of "relaxation."

He had his whole relaxing day planned out in advance. Each activity was carefully recorded on a sheet of paper with strict arrival and departure times marked. It looked more like the schedule of a New York City executive than a day of relaxation. "Mr. Wrestling II said I should relax," Rich said, "but everybody has their own way to relax. If I just sit around all day and do nothing, you better believe that I'll be thinking about Harley Race or The Mongolian Stomper and how I'm going to wrestle them

the next time we meet. No, the only way for me to relax mentally is to keep active."

Tommy folded up the sheet of paper with the day's schedule on it and chuckled. "Stu, you've known me for quite a while," he said. "Have you ever known me to be this organized? I've really got no choice though. There's a lot of things I want to pack into this one day, and if I don't plan it out, I won't get half of it done."

I'll have to admit that I've never had a more enjoyable assignment. All I had to do was spend the day with Tommy Rich. Now if it were Sgt. Slaughter or The Assassins I had to spend time with, I don't think I would have much fun. I mean, what can these guys do with their spare time—kick grandmothers or torture little kids?



Tommy Rich knows how to have a good time. Zipping down the highway in his sports car, you wouldn't believe the amount of gorgeous young ladies who pulled up to catch a glimpse of the young, muscular athlete. Our destination was Hilton Head Island, South Carolina's hottest resort spot. About half-way there, Tommy exited the highway, informing me that we were headed a little bit out of our way to sample the "world's best pina colodas" and it would be worth it.

He was absolutely right. I promised the bartender a free subscription to *PWI* if he would give me the recipe. I also noticed something very peculiar about the people who worked at the bar. While everybody was good friends with Tommy and obviously knew what he did for a living, there was absolutely no talk of professional wrestling.

"Ya noticed that, huh?" the bartender said. "It's true. Hey, we all know that if Tommy is here, he's on a holiday. The last thing he wants to talk about is the thing he is tryin' to get away from. Right?"

It made perfect sense to me.

We arrived in Hilton Head 10 minutes behind schedule, and Tommy shook his head disappointedly. The last time didn't bother me. We had spent hours on the beach, basking in the brilliant sunshine. Then we had an absolutely fabulous dinner, caught a terrific blue grass concert, and proceeded to a disco that is every bit as good as Studio 54 was in its heyday.

I've never seen Tommy so content and happy. As for myself, I just kept thinking about comedian Steve Martin's song in which he sings, "...but the most amazing thing of all is I get paid for doing this." ☐

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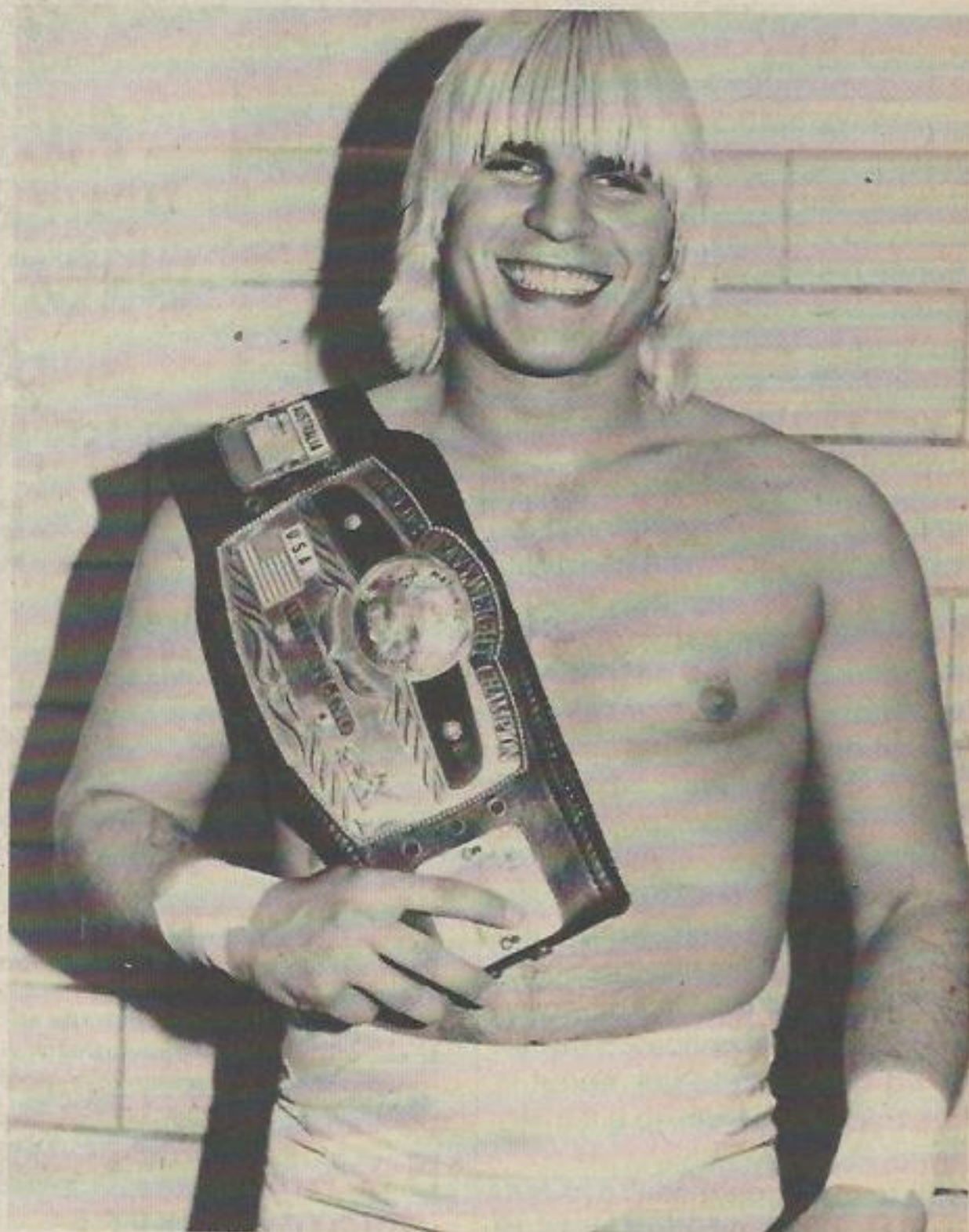
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## PRESS CONFERENCE

(Continued from Page 25)



Rich poses proudly with his NWA championship belt (above) after his hard-fought victory over Harley Race in Augusta, Georgia (opposite right). Race regained the belt five days later in Gainesville, Georgia.

like once you'd lost the belt? outlook on life now. I can better  
RICH: Real low, but accept victory and defeat. Once  
fortunately, only for a while. I you've tasted victory, you know  
guess I'm a lot more mature there's a flip side, see? There's  
than I was. The old Tommy no such thing as just winning  
Rich would have felt sorry for because without losing, well,  
himself. But I have a healthier you see you need both. Unless

**"I want the NWA title back. I got kinda used to wearing it. But I'm going to do it in an orderly fashion, I'm gonna be persistent without being obsessive."**



you can put both in their proper perspective, you're gonna end up a basket case. And I want to hold onto myself and keep myself in a proper perspective.

KING: Did winning the Georgia heavyweight title mean as much as winning the NWA title?

RICH: Not quite, but it was important. It was in Georgia where I first really got a following and where so many of



my fans are. So it was like a homecoming, to win a title like that. Really, it was a wonderful feeling, really great.

APTER: What are your plans now?

RICH: First of all, to enjoy life a little, to breathe a little, to have fun. Oh, I want the NWA title back. I got kinda used to wearing it, know what I mean? But I'm gonna do it in an orderly fashion, I'm gonna be persistent without being obsessive. That's about all I can do.

KING: What's that?

RICH: Try my very best. Who can ask for more than that from another human being? ☐

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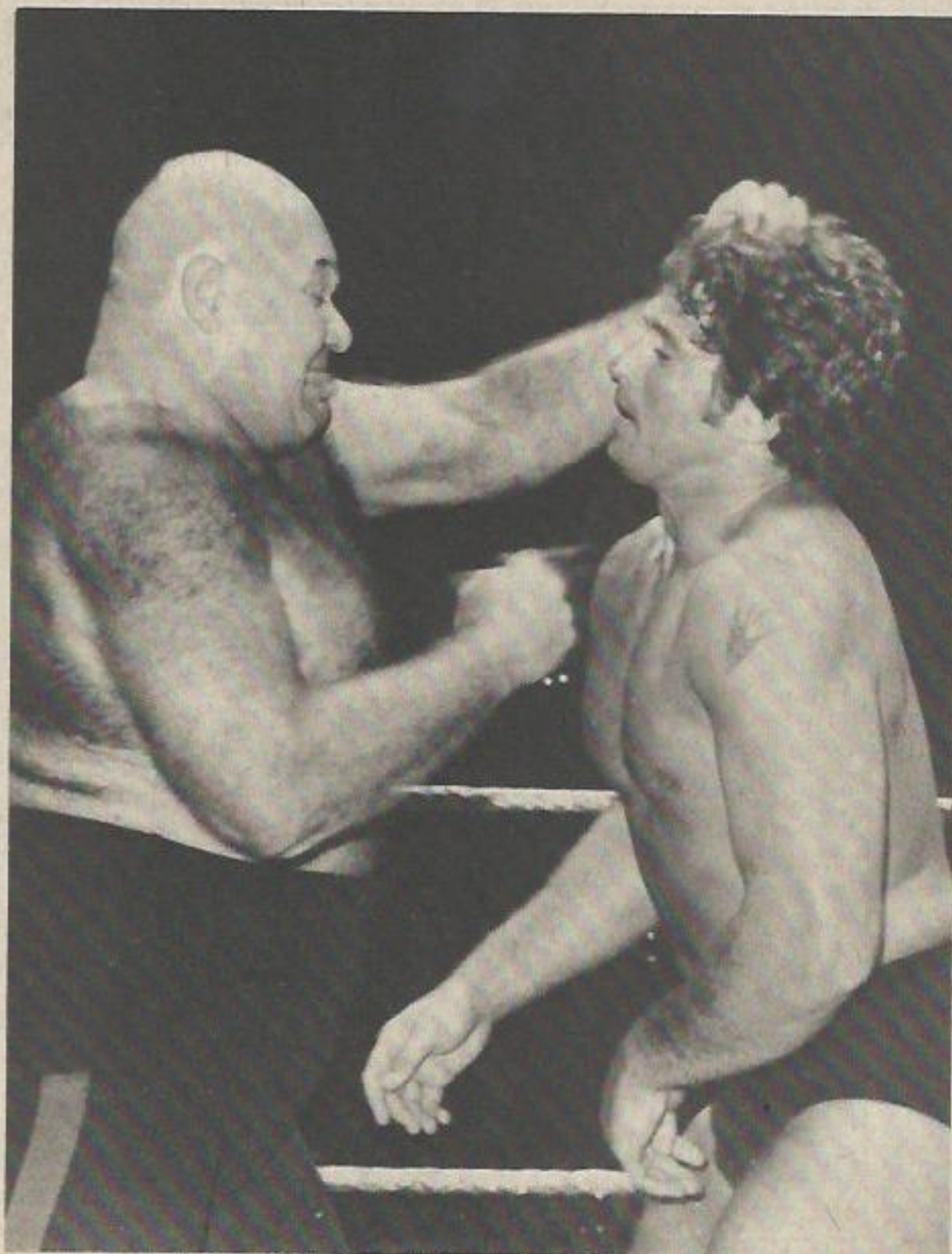
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## ON ASSIGNMENT

(Continued from Page 18)



*Steele holds Tony Garea's head and fires a sharp right. Despite his peculiar habits and speech patterns, one gets the impression that there is a heart within that hairy exterior.*

away from her. I took the other.

"Bagels and lox, bagels and lox, we'll both have bagels and lox," Steele said, without looking at the menu. Who was I to argue? I really prefer orange juice and bacon and eggs in the morning, but what George wants, George gets.

"You a writer?" Steele asked. I nodded my head and reminded him of the hours we spent in Detroit a year ago. "Who?" he asked. "Who?" he demanded to know. I wanted very much to answer him, but I

had no idea what he wanted to know. Then I figured it out: "Who?" is George Steele's way of asking someone their name.

"Steve Farhood," I answered. Steele seemed relieved that another person understood him. "Yes," he shouted. A single bubble of saliva was forming at the side of his mouth.

"George," I continued, "you—wrestle Backlund—New York—you win?" Here I was, a college graduate, muttering baby talk to a grown man twice my size.

Predictably, George didn't answer me. I played nervously with my fork while we waited for the food. George kept looking towards the kitchen, stretching his neck to get a better view of when the waitress would bring our food.

"Bagels and lox, bagels and lox," he screamed as the food arrived. Steele waited for his meal to be placed before him. Then he flipped his plate over so the bagels and lox lay on the table. He took the empty plate, handed it to me, and proceeded to pick the lox off the bagel and eat it with his bare hands. I suddenly remembered what a promoter had once told me. Signatures are required on all contracts before a wrestler is allowed in the ring. George, however, doesn't know a pen from a toothbrush and he places the writing utensil in his mouth every time. For George, the promoters bend the rules a bit. This, I realized, is a very primitive, unique human being.

I wanted to ask George about his childhood, about his mother and father, what they did, where were they now. I figured I had about as much of a chance at getting answers as I did of winning the Boston Marathon. We just ate in silence; I kept watching George, and he never looked up, polishing off his precious bagels and lox as if it were the last meal of his life.

George picked up the tab, paying with the only piece of paper in his wallet, a \$100 bill. He offered his hand to say goodbye, and I shook it. Again, there was a bubble forming on his face. This time, it was a teardrop, in the corner of his eye. I left to get my car. George stayed in the booth and ordered another helping of bagels and lox. □



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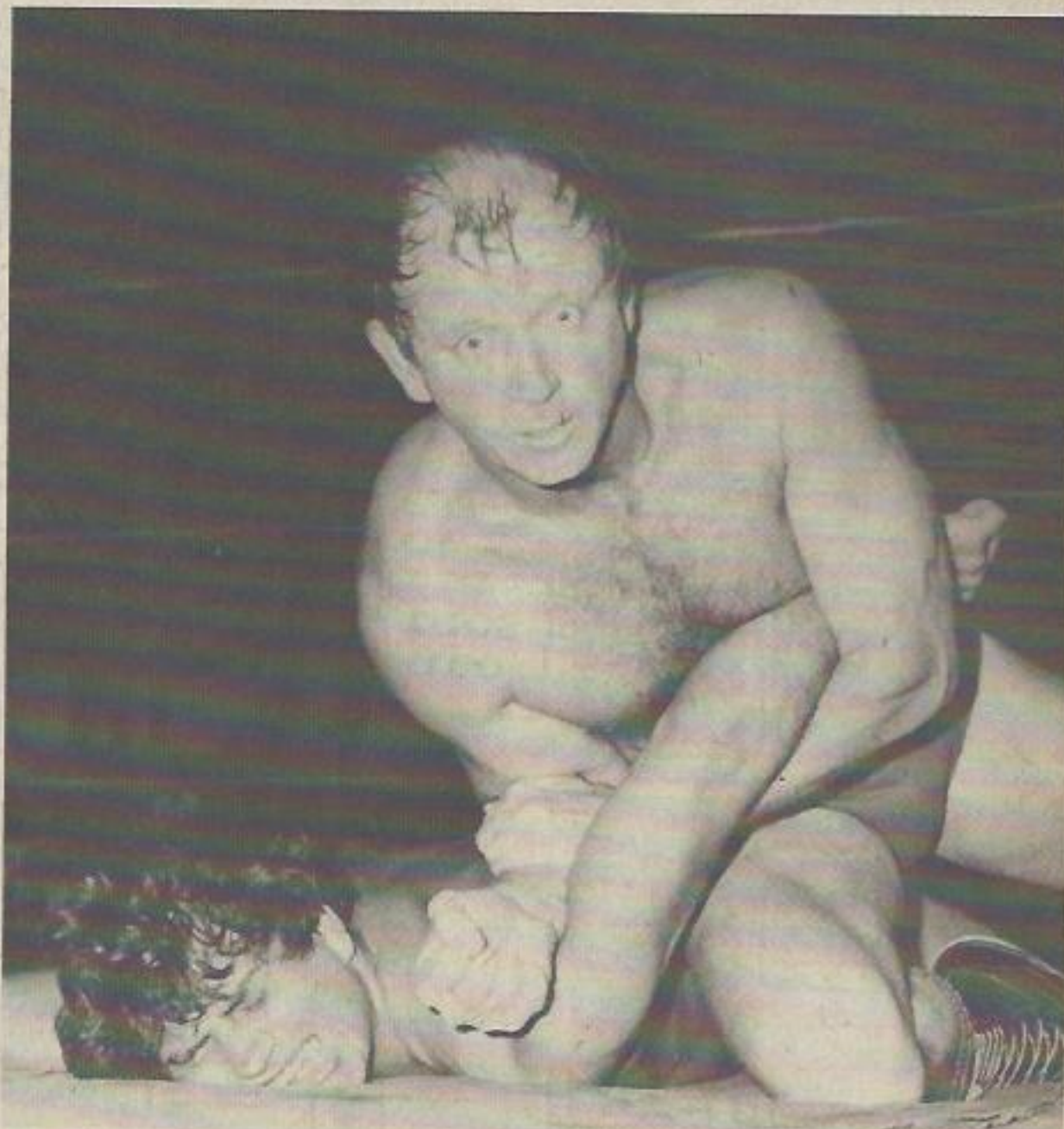
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**MIL MASCARAS**

(Continued from Page 47)



*Dory's eyes bulge as he sees Jerry Brisco's partner heading toward the action (above). Mascaras wisely keeps Dory away from the opposing corner, where he would surely receive help from Terry (below).*



they uphold the highest standards of professional wrestling.

"When Jerry phoned me and explained his dilemma to me, I thought for a few seconds. To be honest, I was still hesitant to commit myself. But then I began realizing what would have happened if Jerry did not have a partner.

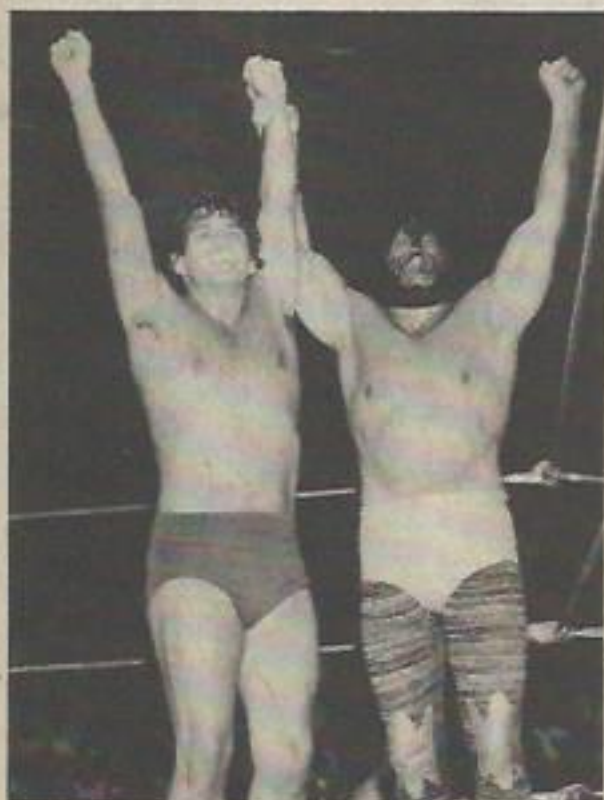
"Of course, you know that the Funks would have accused the Briscos of cowardice and I cannot abide listening to lies. People might believe the Funks and lose respect for a pair of wonderful wrestlers like Jack and Jerry Brisco.

"And you do know that once men like the Funks gain credence, people listen closer to what they say. If people believe their foolish lies and believe that the Briscos are



cowards, then what is to stop people from further believing something the Funks might say about other wrestlers, even myself?

"So I realized I had to commit myself to this feud. The Briscos and myself share certain attitudes toward wrestling and once the Funks get away with saying things about them, they can go after me. I firmly believe the best defense is a good offense. Besides, I consider the Briscos friends."



*Brisco and Mascaras celebrate their disqualification victory over the Funks. Jack would be proud.*

Terry and Dory welcomed the unexpected partner.

"Well, I can tell he's a little outta shape," said Dory Jr. "You can tell, he's got a pot belly. Now I don't know if I'm positive that it's Jack under the mask, like Terry is, because it's hard to tell. Both Jack and Mascaras are so outta shape, so pitiful, I don't know how you can tell 'em apart."

Jerry and Mil blended their skills with stunning precision. After absorbing a beating, the Funks resorted to rulebreaking and lost by disqualification.

"Well, this should shut them up for a while," said Jerry in the dressing room. He turned to Mil and nodded. Mil nodded back. Verbal thanks weren't necessary.

Not between brothers. ☐

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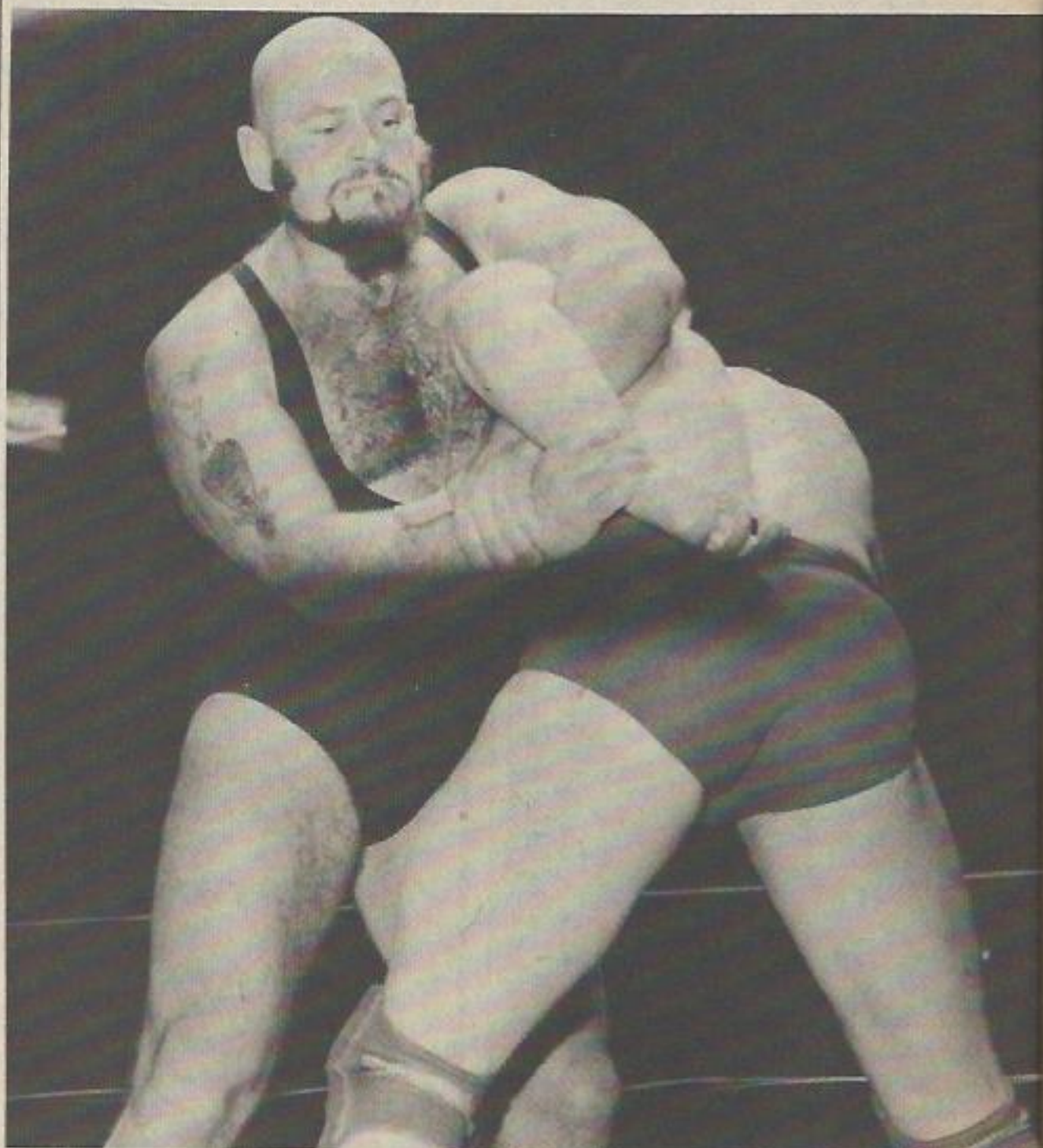
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66

# BACKLUND-KOLOFF

(Continued from Page 30)



*In one of the match's quieter moments, Koloff applies a combination arm-wristlock. Bruno Sammartino felt it was a shame that the whole match couldn't be wrestled scientifically, but that's just not Koloff's style, he says.*

psychological weapon. Sometimes it works and he frightens his opponent. But Backlund is too smart to fall for that, and he just seemed to ignore the look.

Koloff immediately seized Backlund and tried to fling him to the ground, but Backlund escaped and applied an absolutely stunning hold. The crowd actually gasped when they saw how Backlund snared Koloff. But then Koloff wriggled free of the move, stepped back and charged Backlund. Both men fell back

against the ropes and Koloff poked Backlund in the eye. That got the champion mad and he swung back. Backlund was careful not to break any rules, but you could see how angry he was. Once Backlund fought back, Koloff tried to get Backlund in a bearhug, but Backlund broke free and slammed Koloff in the chest. Koloff reeled back. From my ring-side seat I could see that Koloff was not glaring anymore, but now he was just plain angry.

This is the point of the





Backlund gets the best of this mid-ring collision as he sends Koloff stumbling to the mat. These two greats will undoubtedly meet again.

match where the tempers got frayed and all niceties went right over the top rope. The two men slugged it out and continued beating each other until neither could hardly stand. It got so heated that the referee had to declare a double disqualification.

I really think that this match would have stayed clean if Koloff hadn't resorted to cheating. Backlund tried to keep it aggressive and fair, but Koloff would not allow that.

My analysis of the match is that Backlund missed an opportunity to apply his atomic spinecrusher mid-way through when he did not react quick enough to the opening. Also, I think Koloff sensed that he could not win fairly and then incited Backlund into his kind of wrestling so the match would turn into a brawl.

It was a shame that it could not have been just a good clean match, but that is the way Ivan Koloff is.

This is Bruno Sammartino from Atlanta, Georgia. □

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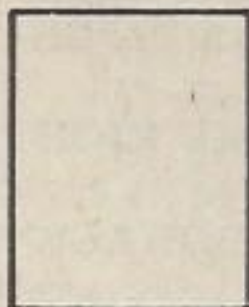
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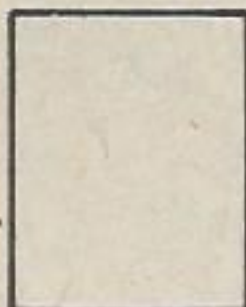
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